

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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Diocesan
Histories

Normirch



ST. JOHN DE SEPULCHRE, NORWICH.—An effort is being made to raise funds for the restoration of the tower of the church of St. John de Sepulchre, Norwich. This church is said to be one of the twenty-five churches in Norwich which were erected by Edward the Confessor, who reigned from A.D. 1042 to A.D. 1066. The building has undergone, however, many changes, and little or nothing now remains of the original church. In the earliest writings the church is called St. Sepulchre, not St. John, &c., as now; as it was dedicated to St. John the Baptist at a later date. On the death of Richard de Beaufo, Ebrard, the second Bishop of Norwich, purchased the endowment with that of St. Nicholas which was situated at the corner of the road now leading to Carrow-bridge. It was much frequented by fishermen and watermen, who made offerings to St. Nicholas, their patron saint. In 1139 the Bishop gave and appropriated it to the monks for use of their infirmary. The keeper received all the profits and tithes, and, in return, paid the priest, and also repaired the chancel. At the appropriation the convent received all the tithes of many lands outside the gates in right of the church. The church is situated in one of the poorest districts of the city, and the net endowment of the living is only 80*l.* per annum. Its tower, which is one of the landmarks of the neighbourhood, is cracked from summit to base, and of its peal of five bells two are broken, and the remainder require re-fitting. It is estimated that the work of restoration will cost about 1,000*l.* 1898

11



A. J. Boddy

DIOCESAN HISTORIES.

NORWICH.

BY

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WITH MAP.

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P R E F A C E .

WHEN I undertook to draw up a brief history of the East Anglian Diocese, I was living within a stone's throw of the archives of the see and of the arch-deaconries of Norfolk and Norwich. By the great kindness of the keepers of those treasures I had, in the course of years, acquired some familiarity with them, and in a vague manner I had been making notes and extracts which had accumulated upon me. I thought it probable that I could write my book, *currente calamo*, in three months. Alas ! it is one thing to know something, or even a great deal, *about* your subject, and quite another to know the subject itself. It ended by my going through all the early episcopal registers, page by page, and by my filling many volumes with notes, each of those volumes more bulky than the little one to which they have served as apparatus. It is not likely that the result of my labours—if they deserve such a grand name—will ever interest any one else as much as the research itself has interested me. I have laid under contribution a very large mass of original sources

which are easily accessible to any one who has *served his apprenticeship*, but which, it must be confessed, are in a somewhat chaotic condition ; the most important of them I may perhaps be allowed to indicate for the benefit of others.

I. The principal Records in the Bishop's Registry were noticed in the first Report of the Historical MSS. Commission, but there is a huge mass of documents unarranged and little known which sorely need to be set in order. Perhaps the most valuable of these would prove to be the *Evidence Books* containing the depositions of witnesses in Causes Ecclesiastical. Students of our social history would find here a mine of information which has hardly been looked *at*, certainly not looked *into*, and which would yield a rich return to intelligent research.

II. The Documents belonging to the Archdeaconry of Norfolk are now most carefully preserved, but they have not always been under such conscientious custody. I have some reason for believing that the records, when Tanner was archdeacon, went back as far as the thirteenth century. Now they contain nothing anterior to the sixteenth, not much so early as that. They are comparatively of little value or interest.

III. The Archives of the Archdeaconry of Norwich

are far more extensive and far more valuable than those of the Archdeaconry of Norfolk. Indeed, they are so voluminous that it would be impossible to arrange them until a suitable depository could be provided for them. The extreme kindness and courtesy of Mr. Overbury has enabled me to do something at this important collection, but it is hopeless to think of making any real impression upon it as long as every hour that the student bestows upon it he feels that he is imposing upon the good-nature of a friend on whose hospitality he has no claim.

- IV. The Archives of the Archdeaconry of Suffolk, I am told, are even more rich than those of the Norwich archdeaconry. I have hitherto been deterred from visiting them; but they, too, must contain an immense store of materials requiring to be calendered and arranged.
- V. Of the Documents belonging to the Archdeaconry of Sudbury I can give no account. The greater part of this archdeaconry was handed over to the see of Ely in 1837, and I presume that the bulk of the documents relating to it passed away from us at that time. I happen to know, however, that *all* the documents did not so pass, and that they are

occasionally to be found where they ought not to be.

VI. The Parochial Registers throughout the diocese have been wonderfully well preserved, whatever may be said to the contrary. When a man has taken notes from parish registers by the hundred, and extracted entries by the thousand, he is qualified to pronounce an opinion upon a question of this kind. He knows how much he has to be thankful for.

VII. On the other hand, the enormous destruction of such books, accounts, and other records which were in the custody of the churchwardens is past all reckoning. What remain are but very insignificant fragments, and rarely of any value.

All such sources of information require to be utilised—besides a great many others—by any one who hopes to get any intimate knowledge of the history of a diocese. Unhappily that which has been the case elsewhere has been the case in East Anglia, the Records have at various times suffered very unfair usage, sometimes from mere ignorant carelessness, but sometimes from downright pillage. Foxe, the “Martyrologist,” wrought us very grievous wrong. He was an intimate friend of Bishop Parkhurst, and he evidently had from the bishop the loan of the

old Registers of the see. He extracted from them largely, but he never returned them. At least one of them—and how many more I know not—is by a strange freak of fortune now in the custody of Cardinal Manning. But by far the most shameless plunderer of the see, as far as its ancient evidences are concerned, was Bishop Tanner. During the eleven years that he was Archdeacon of Norfolk he seems to have treated the Records of the archdeaconry as if they were his own, and whenever he got an original document into his hands he kept it and added it to his collection. That he used his documents well, nobody disputes; but the Tanner MSS. and the invaluable Charters and Rolls which he bequeathed to the Bodleian tell their own tale. The incomparable catalogues of these collections would certainly never have been made if they had not found their way to Oxford; but it is a serious consideration to the local antiquary (who is likely to bring to his researches more special knowledge and more enthusiasm than is to be looked for in the Cosmopolitan) that he must incur the inconvenience and expense of a journey to Oxford, and perhaps a long sojourn there, before he can consult documents which have been removed from their proper home. Historical research in the provinces need not be, and ought not to be made unnecessarily difficult. Local antiquaries are in some sense specialists, and to

centralise all historical documents, and gather them all together into one colossal *tabularium*, is going the right way to extinguish the local specialist altogether.

It may be said—and with some justice—that this little volume is a ridiculous little mouse to come out of years of research. Yes, it may be so. But, as one of my correspondents observed to me, *some people have microscopes*.

That there are no blunders—perhaps silly blunders—in the little book I do not at all hope. Of only one writer of history that I ever heard of, can it be said that he has never been convicted of making a mistake; but the Bishop of Chester is not as other men are.

If any students, other than East Anglians, should happen to take up this book, let me suggest to them that there are two matters which deserve much more attention than they have yet received, and which a very little original research would throw great light upon. First, the course which the Black Death ran and the violence of its incidence upon the clergy in the fourteenth century; and, secondly, the extent to which the married clergy were ejected from their livings in Queen Mary's time. There is yet another matter which the records of the Archdeacons' Courts in the various dioceses throw great light upon, viz., the moral condition of the people and the status of the clergy relatively to their flocks. But let me

warn inquirers in this field of research not to be hasty in coming to conclusions, and not to be deterred by the dreary monotony and repulsive character of too much that will come before them. The picture we get of country life, for instance, in the sixteenth century, from these records, first startles, then perplexes the student ; by-and-by he sees the absolute necessity of withholding his verdict, and that a superficial examination would tempt him to construct almost any theory he set himself to support. The fact is that any one can be an Old Bailey advocate. The judicial faculty—the faculty of weighing and sifting evidence, of suspending judgment till the whole case has been laid before us, of gathering up the clues and testing the strength of every strain,—that is a very precious faculty indeed : it is granted to few. Meanwhile hasty generalisation can only land us upon ground where we can never be sure that we have a firm foot-hold.

It will give me great pleasure to correspond with such intelligent inquirers as may wish to be referred to the authorities for any statements I have made in the volume. There is one statement the truth of which I cannot yet substantiate to my satisfaction, though I am persuaded of the truth of it.

I should be very ungrateful if I did not acknowledge my deep obligation to my old friend Dr. Luard, Registrar of the University of Cambridge. His

unrivalled knowledge of mediæval history, his unbounded generosity in imparting it, and his wonderfully quick eye have assisted me in my ignorance, and saved me from error when all other extraneous help had left me where I was.

SCARNING,

June 11, 1884.

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N O R W I C H.



INTRODUCTORY.

“Christianity entered not into this island like lightning, but like light.”—THOMAS FULLER.

SIXTY years before the birth of Christ, Britain was an unknown land to the civilised portion of mankind. There were stories, more or less vague, of the distant isle, mysterious and awful—stories of treasure to be found there, pearls and amber and, some whispered, even gold,—stories, too, of a strange and terrible religion, whose priests were a power greater than kings. It was told that they chanted wild psalms in chorus, songs and sagas such as had been handed down from ages past,—not written words, but a heritage which the memory of the carefully-trained hierophants preserved and passed on, with now and then some gloss or revelation added to the ever-growing burden for successive generations to transmit to posterity. They taught that the soul was immortal; released from the body, it wandered elsewhere, whither they could not tell. Peopling the woods and deserts, they taught, were hosts of beings, malign or friendly, that scared or solaced the settler

in his rough home. And above, in the infinite ether, there dwelt the gods,—the god who sent the thunder; the god who gave the sunshine; one god, whose gift was the mighty power of ready speech, and another who drove men on in the frenzy of battle, and whose thirst was for the captive's blood to moisten his ghastly altar.

To this land, in the year B.C. 55, Julius Cæsar came. He landed in Britain, and did little more; his success was very like failure. Why did he come at all, is a question difficult to answer: the most probable reply being that he came to chastise the Britons for their active support of some Gaulish people who had shown themselves formidable antagonists to the Roman power. Next year Cæsar came again, and this time he ravaged and slew; and when much blood had been shed and much misery wrought, he went back to Gaul, and Britain was left unmolested for nearly a hundred years.

It was not till A.D. 43 that Britain saw a Roman invader again,—then she did. It was in that year, probably, that the believers were first called Christians at Antioch. It was about the time that Saul of Tarsus began his ministry; when James, the brother of John, was slain with the sword; when Simon Peter was miraculously delivered from prison; when Herod Agrippa was king of Judea, and Claudius was emperor at Rome,—that the first real conquest of Britain took place. Aulus Plautius was the general who, with a large force, made this great settlement upon our shores. He stayed four years and he, too, ravaged and slew; but he did something more. In a strait,

he sent for help to the Emperor Claudius and the great sovereign came to visit our island. There was no resisting the force of Roman legions ; this time they came not only to slay, but to settle. Britain, it seems, was even then worth the cost of holding and it was decided it should be held.

There is reason to believe that something like religious persecution had to do with this early warfare between Rome and Britain. It is certain that eighteen years after Aulus Plautius first landed, there was a merciless massacre of the Druid priests and their most devoted adherents in the isle of Anglesea ; it is almost as certain that from that day the old British paganism, in so far as it was a regularly organised system of religious belief, and culture, and ritual, came to an end. Druidism perished by the edge of the Roman sword.¹

From this time the organisation of Britain as a Roman province began. Those poor forefathers of ours had no such very hard lot of it ; they had peace and plenty in exchange for ceaseless war, but the old Religion was gone for ever. Did the Romans, or any devout and earnest men and women among them, do anything to supply the need and to fill the aching void which the heart feels when there is only emptiness there ? Who knows ? Over those early times there hangs a veil, and who shall raise it ? Now and then it is lifted, as when story tells of St. Alban, in the year 283, giving up his life for the faith of Christ ; and when early records prove that

¹ Tac., "Annals," xiv. 30.

three British bishops, and one priest and deacon, were at the Council of Arles in 314; and when writers of the fourth century speak of Britain as a Christian land, not unaffected by the party cries which from the beginning have been heard within the Church's pale, and whose absence is no sign of union, or zeal, or love. At any rate, before the Romans released their hold of Britain,—gave up the colony, in fact, and left it to self-government,—the land may be said to have been Christianised. If Christianity was not in some sense the religion of the people, nothing was; as to its form or ritual, its purity or influence, perhaps it is well we know but little about it.

The Romans left Britain finally A.D. 410, and with their departure hard times began. It is always a trial for a people who have been kept for generations in leading-strings to be left to take care of themselves: the better they have been governed heretofore the worse for them when they are given over to self-elected rulers of a lower stamp than their old masters; and Britain, cut adrift from Roman guidance, support and administration, fell into a condition of anarchy.

Neighbouring people were not slow to make use of their opportunity, so the marauders came across the sea. The *Angles* landed on the east coast of our island, and little by little they established a kingdom known by the name of *East Anglia*.

It will be near enough to the truth if we say that this kingdom extended from the Stour to the Wash; that it was bounded on the north and east by the

sea; that on the west it was shut off from the territory of the Middle Angles by enormous morasses, uncultivated and undrained; and that on the south the Stour served as the boundary which separated it from the kingdom of the East Saxons, which we call Essex.

The coast-line of East Anglia has altered much in the thirteen centuries that have passed since the time we are speaking of, though less than some would have us believe. It has altered most on the northern coast; and yet Brancaster was an important fortress before the East Angles came, and Castor and Burgh were mighty citadels on the banks of the estuary, which needed only to be defended to serve as bulwarks against the assaults of the savage invaders who came swarming across the sea. Doubtless, they came in at every little entry which the numerous harbours on the Norfolk coast afforded. These have, for the most part, silted up since those old days, but in the fifth and sixth centuries their number constituted the weakness of the Norfolk shore. Norfolk was a tempting prize for the spoiler: through the length and breadth of it the Roman colonist had planted and builded. He had made roads and harbours, castles and towers; everywhere the traces of his occupation remain. Even at the present day the ploughman, with his share, turns up here and there hoarded treasures of money, coined, perhaps, in some Norfolk mint less than a hundred years before the Roman legions took their final departure. But the invaders swept away before them the remnants of Roman refinement, and spared no institutions and

no creeds. What churches, or clergy, or schools, existed under the protection or toleration of Roman governors in East Anglia we cannot tell; the ruthless invaders stamped them all out, and for two hundred years or so darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people—the light of the Gospel had been put out, and a brutal paganism bore undisputed sway. Then at last a better time began.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE DAY BROKE.

THE kingdom of the East Angles was not founded in a day. The Angles came across the sea in bands, each under an independent chieftain. The several bands moved like huge gipsy hordes, or like the *colonists* of the Roman Republic, prepared to occupy the lands of a people who were too weak to hold their own, and were to be dispossessed without compunction and without pity. The old inhabitants became the conquerors' bondsmen. By-and-by the separate bands, or clans, or tribes, drew more and more closely together,—though the Northerners and the Southerners (the *Northfolk* and the *Southfolk*) continued to entertain some jealousy of each other to the last,—and there was a tendency to consolidate into a single homogeneous body under a single head.

Outside the borders of East Anglia there were strong kingdoms with strong rulers who governed them; with these kingdoms the Angles had little to do: they kept themselves to themselves, and to their pagan practices. Their defences lay in the vast morasses extending from Lynn to Ely; indeed, as far as Cambridge, and the swamps that stagnated between the Colne and the Stour. While across the only piece of high ground on their frontier, stretching from fen to fen, rose up that marvel of human toil,

the Devil's Dyke—a stupendous rampart serving to keep out the marauders who might be induced to “lift” the flocks and herds, but would find it very hard to escape with their spoil over so huge a barrier. Thus it came to pass that for 150 years or more the East Angles were a people apart. We know very little of them or their doings—how they lived or what they believed. Christians they certainly were not; nay, they made a clean sweep of all that remained of the old Christianity—it vanished! Hence, when Augustine, the apostle of England, landed in Kent in 597, East Anglia cared nothing for his coming: the Gospel did not overpass the barrier of swamp and fen. The Devil's Dyke helped to keep out the light of the truth. When Augustine died in May, 605, and King Æthelbert, his royal convert, followed him to the grave eleven years after (February 24, 616); and Eadbald was king of Kent, and was showing signs of an evil mind; and the mission, begun so auspiciously, seemed on the point of collapsing,—it is small wonder that Augustine's successor at Canterbury, Archbishop Laurence, felt his heart fail. Just when he was tempted to forsake his post and let the Saxons fall back into their paganism, fresh encouragement came.

When Æthelbert died, there was a king of East Anglia named REDWALD, who had grown to be a power outside the limits of his own narrow borders, for he was chosen *Bretwalda*, as men then called the Chief Ruler in England. Redwald had been a pagan; but, for what seem to have been reasons of state, when Æthelbert was dying or was dead,

Redwald made a journey into Kent, and there accepted baptism. On his return into his own land he proved but a half-hearted convert, and he "halted between two opinions,"—between the old heathen practices and the new faith which he had been led to embrace, or at least, to profess. His wife was a woman of strong will, and she clung to the old gods, and King Redwald's nobles were all for the old gods too, and it ended by the king going wrong. But he did one good thing in his time, which prepared the way for the better days that were coming : he stood by his friend, Prince Edwin, who had trusted himself to Redwald's honour ; and, when powerful foes tried to bribe and to scare him that he should betray the young prince, he scorned to lend himself to treachery, and he drew his sword against his friend's enemies and helped him to recover his throne. However, East Anglia was none the less pagan, and continued so as long as Redwald lived and for some years after, even though he was Bretwalda, and the first Christian king that ruled over the land. When he died, EORPWALD, his son, succeeded him as king ; but Prince Edwin became Bretwalda, or Chief Ruler, and a true Christian he was. After awhile, Edwin tried hard to induce Eorpwald and his people to accept the Gospel, and Eorpwald would gladly have done so, but again the East Anglian nobles fiercely resisted the change ; and when King Eorpwald, with much earnestness and zeal, tried to bring them to a better mind, one of them, Ricbert by name, smote the king that he died, and there was much trouble in East Anglia, and for three years the

pagans had it all their own way. At last (A.D. 631), SIGEBERT, half-brother to Eorpwald, found himself king of East Anglia. The new king had passed some years in what is now called France, and there he had lived among Christian men of piety and learning, and had learned all that the best teachers of the time could teach him, insomuch that they called him SIGEBERT THE LEARNED. When he came to his kingdom he proved too strong for the rude chiefs, and he turned not to the right hand nor the left when he once resolved that his people should be brought to the knowledge of the Christ.

Augustine had now been dead more than thirty years, and his three successors had in like manner passed away. HONORIUS now filled the place of chief ruler of the Church in England,—a man of wisdom and devotion, and with an apostle's heart. Just as Sigebert began to reign, there landed upon our island a certain Burgundian clergyman whose spirit God had moved to cross the seas and preach the Gospel among the heathen in Britain. This man went to Archbishop Honorius, and left himself in the Archbishop's hands to do with him as he would; and Honorius, when he found what temper he was of, sent the new-comer to King Sigebert. His name was FELIX. Sigebert was glad, and after awhile he would have FELIX become the one bishop in his kingdom; and forasmuch as at this time the *Southfolk* were of more account than the *Northfolk*, and forasmuch, too, as it was well that the bishop of East Anglia should have his home where there was most doing—most trade and commerce, and large

gatherings of people,—it was settled that the site of the bishop's dwelling, and the chair on which he sat when he spoke with authority, and the home centre from which he did his work, should be fixed at what was then a flourishing seaport. Thus FELIX, the Burgundian missionary, became BISHOP OF DUNWICH, and Dunwich was the first bishopric in East Anglia.

FELIX was for seventeen years bishop of Dunwich, and he showed conspicuous wisdom in the conduct of his diocese. He did not trust to preaching only: a man of learning himself, he knew what a mighty power education may become, if it be really religious education; and he set up a school in East Anglia, taught, it would seem, by those who were engaged with him in the work of evangelising the pagan people, and this school soon got a great name.¹ Bishop FELIX met with extraordinary success as an evangeliser, and his fame travelled far. Sigebert's reign was brief, and after him king succeeded king in East Anglia with sad rapidity; yet FELIX stayed at his post, and his work continued to prosper. The best proof of his success was that, spite of all the strife and warfare, the people of East Anglia became more and more content and happy; and for seventeen years FELIX was practically the chief ruler: for, though the kings rose and fell, fought and fled and died, FELIX

¹ I cannot doubt that this school was the "coetum non minimum monachorum," which the traditions of a later age credited Felix with having raised at Saham-Tony (Norfolk). The story of the exciting *boat-race* between the monks of Ramsey and those of Ely on *Soham Mere* (in Cambridgeshire), for the bones of St. Felix, may be read in the "Hist. Ramesiensis," apud Gale, *Scriptores* xv. p. 437.

continued to be the counsellor and adviser of them, each and all, and they looked up to him, and none doubted but that he would be their most powerful supporter if they could gain his friendship.

And thus, as I have said, the fame of this East Anglian bishop spread abroad into other lands, and they whose hearts were warm with zeal for good things desired to see FELIX, and to learn the secret of his success, and to hear his voice and receive his counsel. Among these, there came from across the sea one FURSEY, an Irishman, and with him came two of his brethren, FULLAN and ULTAN by name, and two priests, who were called GOBBAN and DICUL. Fursey was a monk ; that is, he was one who had bound himself by a vow to give his whole life to the service of God, and he had set out with his little company from their own country to help Bishop FELIX in spreading the knowledge of the Gospel.

In those days to be a monk meant something very different from what it got to mean in the after-time ; and Fursey and his friends were not the men to shrink from toil and hardship. Five-and-twenty miles from Dunwich, as the crow flies, on the edge of what is now called Breydon Water, a small tract of land rose in those days a few feet above the wide expanse of mud and ooze which surrounded it on all sides, and which, even to this day, makes the district at low tide appear drearily desolate and forbidding. During the Roman occupation a fortress had been built here by the great conquerors, in which a strong garrison was maintained to hold in check the pirates (who were ready to work havoc upon the

shipping at sea) and to overawe the turbulence of refractory subjects on land. The Romans had called it Garianonum, but it had long ago become a mere lonely ruin. The Angles had never dreamt of keeping up the vast fortifications and massive walls; they called the place Cnobbesburgh, and we know it now as Burgh Castle. In Bishop FELIX's days it must have been as wild and cheerless a spot as could be found. This place Fursey fixed his eyes upon, and begged that he might be permitted to go and dwell there. For the busy haunts of the multitude, their buying and selling, their intrigues and strife, their comforts, and ease, and corrupting luxury,—Fursey, and such as he—pledged to lead the higher life—looked upon these as fraught with danger to the soul. Let the bishop—the ruler of God's people—live where he might, but the monk must live away from the world, and turn his back upon it. So Fursey went his way to Cnobbesburgh, and there from the masonry of the old Roman walls that were crumbling he built a house for such as wished to retire from the cares and temptations of the world, and serve God more strictly than elsewhere it was possible. It was probably a little before this that King Sigebert too, sick of all the quarrels and strife from which there seemed to be no escape, turned his back upon the world, resigned his crown, and hid himself in another retreat at a place which then was called Bedericsworth, but which afterwards gained the name of St. Edmondsbury. These two houses are said to have been the first two MONASTERIES in East Anglia, but they very little resembled the grand establish-

ments of the after-time. They can have had very little to attract the frivolous or the insincere, and the life these recluses led was hard, laborious, and painful. The famous *Rule of St. Benedict* had only found its way into Britain about thirty years before Bishop FELIX's day, and the Angles were as yet quite unprepared for such an institution as a monastery.

Bishop FELIX gave up his soul to God on the 8th March, 647, and was buried at Dunwich, where and whence he had laboured so long. In his place they chose one THOMAS by name, born, we are told, *in the Fen country*, which may mean hard by Lynn or down near Ely; in any case, he was an East Anglian born. There is this notable about him, that he was only the *second* Englishman consecrated to take the oversight of any English see, the first having been ITHAMAR, the Kentishman, consecrated bishop of Rochester three years before. We hear very little of Bishop Thomas, or, indeed, of his successors in the episcopate, for some time to come; no one of them seems to have been a leading spirit, but it is pretty certain that they were quietly labouring in East Anglia, and not labouring in vain. Meanwhile, the great chiefs, who had been too strong for Redwald and his successors, gave but a sullen toleration to the new creed, and their hearts went after their idols; and they would not consent that great tracts of land should be given to such people as might be inclined to found a religious establishment. So Bishop FELIX died (647), and Bishop THOMAS (652); and one BERTGILS, who, for some reason, chose to change his name to BONIFACE, followed. But still there were no great

churches, and no great monastic or ecclesiastical foundations in East Anglia.

It was in the year 655, when BONIFACE had been bishop of Dunwich three years, that a dreadful catastrophe befel the reigning house. PENDA the Prompt, king of Mercia, "the last unshaken and powerful adherent of paganism among the Anglo-Saxons,"¹ burst in upon the Anglian land, which was then ruled by a king called ANNA; and the king went out to meet the invader, but he fell by the edge of the sword, and there was huge slaughter of his people. Then Penda the Prompt (A.D. 655) ravaged the land, and set up ÆTHELHERE, Anna's brother, as king in his stead,—for Anna had no son. And yet, says Bede, Anna was "the parent of good children, and was happy in a good and holy progeny," for he left behind him four daughters, and they were all ladies of a devout temperament and with a zeal for godliness according to their light; and they all renounced the pleasures of this world and retired to spend their days in prayer and praise, and in the practice of gentle ministrations and religious austerity.

SEXBURGA, the eldest daughter, had married Erconbert, king of Kent, and when he was carried off by the plague in 664 she became regent of the kingdom. Wearying of the duties that devolved upon her, she soon took refuge in a convent which she had founded in the Isle of Sheppey; but after remaining there for some years she joined her sister, ÆTHELDREDA, who had got to herself a great name by her devout enthusiasm

¹ Lapp., i. 164.

in founding, among the gloomy morasses on the borders of her own land, the famous monastery of Ely,—a marvel of grandeur even in the seventh century, and out of whose ashes in the after-time rose up to heaven that glorious pile which still amazes the traveller who is passing by the iron road from Cambridge to Norwich. A third sister, ETHELBERGA, crossed the Channel and died abbess of Brie; and a fourth, WITBERGA, remained in her own land and passed her days at East Dereham in devout retirement, but left no great and abiding monument behind her. Nor were these all of the house of King Anna who were possessed by a yearning for the higher life as they imaged it according to the belief of their times. For Anna's brother, Ethelhere, whom Penda the Prompt had set up as king when Anna was slain, had married another devout princess in whose heart the grace of God was working mightily, and her name was HERESWITH. She, when trouble came upon her, and it came heavily, fled away and became a nun at *Chelles*, near Paris, where it is probable she had passed her girlhood, and had, with others of her kindred, received her schooling. But more famous than all these five was Hereswith's sister, HILDA, the great foundress of Whitby Abbey, in the Northumbrian land, of whom this is not the place to speak; for, though she tried to do some pious work amongst the East Angles, she did it not, and of monasteries *within* the borders of that land as yet there were none that had any great name or fame.

When the queen Hereswith retired from the world, she left her son behind her, for she had a son by

Æthelhere, ALDWULF by name, and he was king of the East Angles. The impress of his mother's training remained upon him, and the prayers of the saintly Hilda had not been offered up in vain. The reign of King Aldwulf was long and prosperous, and it was the reign of a Christian king; and when he died in 713, he died at peace with all men,¹ but he left only three daughters behind him. As others of their kindred had done, so did they; they took refuge in the life of the cloister. EADBURGH became abbess of Repton, in Mercia, and ETHELBURGA and HWÆTBURGA, the other daughters, were successively abbesses of Hackness, in the Northumbrian land.

It was in the reign of King Aldwulf that the pope of Rome sent into England another of those great leaders who leave their mark upon their own times, and shape the lives and mould the thoughts and habits of men for ages after they themselves have passed away. This man was THEODORE of TARSUS, appointed to preside over the see of Canterbury and govern the Church in England. He was in his sixty-seventh year, but he had never had experience of any parochial cure, nor, till his nomination, had he even been ordained. Yet he proved himself a born ruler, and exactly the man that England needed to bring into living and loving union the bishops in the petty kingdoms into which our island was then divided. Heretofore they had been doing the work of evangelising in too great isolation, and they needed to be knit together into a compact and well-disciplined

¹ His name appears among the signatories to the Council of Hatfield, Sept. 17, 688.—Hadden and Stubbs, iii., 141.

body, "moving all together when they moved at all." It was in 669 (May 27) that Theodore took his seat as archbishop in the great church at Canterbury, and it was seventy-two years since Augustine had set foot upon our shores. In the interval that had elapsed, the vast extension of the area over which the Gospel had spread its hallowing influence, and the mighty force which it had exercised upon princes and people, had wrought a prodigious revolution in the fabric of society. The English bishops, however, still needed direction, counsel, and oversight from head-quarters; pretty much in the same way that, in our own days, the bishops of New Zealand or South Africa look to Canterbury for support and aid in their difficulties, and are loyal in their allegiance to, and proud of their connexion with, the mother Church at home. But the English Church had become far more *self-supporting* than any of our colonial Churches are, and as kings had been among her nursing fathers, and queens her nursing mothers, she had already become very wealthy, and her bishops were among the great ones of the land.

So, again, the educational work of the clergy, and of those who were *then* their devoted and most able auxiliaries, the monks—their zeal not yet grown cold; their faith not clouded; their hearts aglow with the consuming fire of love and the flame of enthusiasm,—the educational work, I say, had produced unexampled effects. Everywhere, by this time, the Gospel had been received with gladness of heart, and it had become easy to find Englishmen quite fitted for the episcopal office. The danger was now lest the work

which had grown so rapidly should prove more than the bishops could do efficiently: in other words, there was need of more bishops; need of that which we of late have been compelled to think much about—the sub-division of the English dioceses. One of the first things, which Theodore set himself to provide for was this very object, and he carried it out on a large scale. Among other dioceses, that of DUNWICH was divided into two; for BISI, the bishop, was old, and his journeys told upon him, and he felt unequal to his work. Theodore, taking counsel with ALDWULF the king, suffered BISI to lay down his office, and in his room he consecrated two bishops—one to labour among the *Southfolk* from the old centre at DUNWICH, and one to be bishop among the *Northfolk* from a new centre, ELMHAM, in the heart of the country, where formerly a Roman magistrate had had his seat of government on high ground, and where there still existed some extensive remnants of the old Roman grandeur. Here, in the year A.D. 673, BEDWIN was consecrated bishop over the northern half of the original East Anglian diocese, while ACCI, or, as some call him, ETTI, was appointed to preside over the southern half and to take the place of bishop at DUNWICH, with a less unwieldly bishopric than BISI and his predecessors had administered heretofore. This came to pass less than seventy-one years after Augustine fell asleep at Canterbury, and little more than 260 years after the Roman legions left our forefathers to defend themselves against the heathen.

CHAPTER II.

STORM-CLOUDS AND SUNSHINE.

WHEN Archbishop THEODORE landed in Kent in May, 669, he knew that he had no time to lose ; his youth was past, and the night in which no man can work was drawing nigh. We are told that in that same year, 669, the archbishop made a visitation of all England, and, it is added, he was the first prelate to whom all the English bishops made submission, acknowledging him as their primate and head.

In those days people were more easily governed than now ; it was an age when "the man that could rule and dare not lie" found the masses willing to submit to his sway, the yearning to be led was stronger than the hankering to be rid of all control. Outside the Church's pale, the petty kings were scheming, plotting and warring each against the other ; within that pale there was unity of purpose and unity of action. The one Faith tended to make men, in their better moments, of one mind. Thus it came to pass that the English bishops gladly gave their allegiance to Theodore, and while the king of Mercia to-day, or the king of Wessex to-morrow, or the king of Northumbria a third day, might be laying plots against his rivals, or taking measures to thwart their ambitious projects, the bishops, under their

head at Canterbury, held together as one man ; and while discord and mutual suspicion were acting as elements of weakness and disintegration in the kingdoms of the world, the ecclesiastical organisation, uniting compactly together the several chiefs of the Church for concerted action, was steadily and surely helping forward the growth of a power which must sooner or later become dominant for good or evil. While Theodore was primate, all men were the better for his wise rule. We are expressly told that those days were the happiest and the most prosperous that England had known since the Romans left the land. England was a Christian country, heathenism had been vanquished and abolished, the Cross had triumphed.

The bringing in of the Gospel in the days of AUGUSTINE had resulted in a great *religious* awakening ; the coming of Theodore and his associates was followed by a great *intellectual* movement. Schools were set up in every diocese ; children were taught the languages of Greece and Rome, and the rudiments of arithmetic, music, and astronomy ; but a knowledge of Holy Scripture was the basis of all education. With a view to keeping alive an *esprit de corps* among the clergy, and of ensuring unity of action, THEODORE summoned a council on the 24th September, 673, at Hertford, at which all the bishops in England were present in person or by deputy ; and at this council it was resolved that every year a general synod should be held at a place called Clovesho,¹ at which the bishops of every diocese should attend. The grand

¹ It is not known where this place was.

idea was not strictly carried out,—indeed, during Theodore's primacy, no synod was held at Clovesho at all; yet from this time we may certainly date that practice of frequent assemblies of the chief rulers of the Church, records of whose proceedings have been handed down to our own day. Meagre as these records are, they are nevertheless sufficient to prove clearly that, during all those centuries which elapsed between the coming of Theodore and the coming of the Conqueror, the life of faith and prayer and praise was never allowed to grow quite dead in England; and that the bishops of the several Churches worked together, on the whole, harmoniously. Of the bishops of East Anglia during this period we know scarcely anything but their names: indeed, the stream of history almost flows past that little kingdom, guarded by the sea on one side, and by fens and morasses on the other; and while Wessex and Mercia and Northumbria were engaged in ceaseless warfare for the supremacy over all, which each aimed at, in East Anglia there was that approximation to anarchy which is wont to grow up among a people where there is no master-mind in Church or State to stamp the impress of his own personality upon the community. During a century and a half after Theodore's time, the names of the East Anglian bishops appear regularly among the signatures to the acts of the National Synods; with the coming of the Danes they disappear, and, for nearly a hundred years, of not a single East Anglian bishop is there any mention or record. Meanwhile, it is worthy of notice that, where these names do occur, they are the names of Englishmen, and no

nominees of Rome ; native-born Norfolk and Suffolk men not ashamed to be called as bishops what they had been called by their people all their lives ; not men to give in to the fantastic notion that a Latin quadrisyllable was a grander title than an English dissyllable. All these bishops doubtless *spoke* Latin as easily as a Belgian gentleman now speaks French, but they *felt* like Englishmen, and their hearts were with those who were of their own blood. That they laboured steadily and with good effect is plain from the fact that, when the evil days came, the plunderers found so much to rob, and that they turned their fury so often upon the houses of God in the land. But evil days did come,—very evil days. Rumours of the wealth and prosperity of our island had gone forth into all lands, and the heathen people on the other side of the sea were tempted by the stories which travellers spread. The Northmen manned their ships and sailed away to see if some vast booty might not be gained. They came, and they met with a much feebler resistance than they could have expected. It is said they *landed* first in Dorsetshire in 787 : they *settled* first in East Anglia in 866.

We read that in this year “a great heathen army came to the land of the English nation, and took up their winter-quarters among the East Angles, and there they were housed ; and the East Angles made peace with them.” These were those terrible Northmen whom we call the Danes, and of whom it is enough to say that they were really heathen, as the Chronicle calls them. They had a religion of their own, such as it was ; a religion that ran exactly counter

to the Gospel of Christ, the spirit that animated it, and the habits that it tended to form. It was a religion for rude warriors, and when it had helped to make them that it could do no more for them. But to that fierce creed it seems that these Danes were true, and it may be—it may be—that our English forefathers, in their years of peace, had not been true to *their* creed, and needed the fiery trial through which, in the ninth century, their Christianity was called upon to pass.

The Danes first passed the winter in East Anglia in 867, and there they prepared their host for the campaign of the next spring. Then they set forth, and for three years they ravaged and slew. They laid waste the country now known as Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Notts, and in the winter of 870 they came back, and, as the Chronicle tells us, they took up their winter-quarters at Thetford. But, while they were away, the men of East Anglia had gathered heart. East Anglia had then a Christian king, and his name was EDMUND. He abhorred the doings of the heathen marauders and all their ferocious godlessness, and he persuaded his own people to follow him and to strike one blow for freedom from the oppressor. So he fought a great battle with the Danes near Bury in Suffolk; but they were too strong for him, and the men of East Anglia fled, and their king was taken. The Danish chieftains would have spared his life, but they would do so only upon one condition,—he must renounce the faith of his baptism, and abjure the Saviour and His Cross. Thereupon King Edmund made his choice like a

brave and true man ; and the Danes bound him to a tree and shot at him with arrows that he died. Then they cut off the king's head and they went their ways.

This is that Edmund whom men in the after-time revered as a saint of God, and who gave his name to the place where he was slain, and which, since those days, has been called Bury St. Edmund's. This is that Edmund whose name was given to many another house of God in East Anglia, and whose picture may still be seen painted on many a rood-screen—as it was once frequently to be seen on the church walls—to the intent that those who came after might be reminded of the story of the king's glorious end, and be stimulated to follow the example of him who had preferred death to denying his Lord.

There must have been something of the nature of a religious war in this revolt of the East Anglians from the domination of the Danes. The story of King Edmund's death points this way ; and perhaps the king had stirred up his people by telling them it was a scandal for Christian men to be the servants of the Pagans. Be that as it may, the revolt was no sooner suppressed than the Danes seem to have said : "Let us make havoc of them altogether," and in a frenzy of exasperation they began to burn and destroy as they had never done before. The full force of their attack fell upon the churches and monasteries. In East Anglia itself there do not seem to have been any important religious foundations ; but, on the edge of the little kingdom among the swamps and dreadful morasses, four great religious houses had risen up

where men in companionship were trying to live the higher life ; where they were trying to cultivate the arts of peace, though war was for ever howling round them ; where they professed to teach the young and ignorant, to proclaim the beauty of holiness, and to witness for the grandeur of the Gospel of purity and love in an age of cruelty, lust, and rapine ; where imperfectly and sometimes foolishly,—sometimes, too, after a fashion that we have been taught to disapprove,—they spent their days in justifying the works of God to man, and became the centres of culture and civilisation,—the pioneers of progress in their generation. These four great monasteries were: Peterborough, founded by Oswy more than two hundred years before this time ; Crowland, which had already risen to something like splendour ; Thorney, an early offshoot from Peterborough, and destined to become by-and-by one of the grandest of them all ; and Ely, where two communities, one of monks and the other of nuns, still kept up the life of prayer and praise while ministering to the poor, the ignorant, and the sorrowing. All these four great houses did the Danes—*because they were religious institutions*—ruthlessly destroy ; and that which the Chronicle says of one is true of all :—“ They came and burned and beat it down, slew the abbot and monks and all that they found there. And that place, which before was full rich, they reduced to nothing.”

This was the first great suppression of the monasteries in England, and, as far as East Anglia was concerned, it was as complete and unsparing as that which followed seven centuries after.

It was during the year after the pillage of the monasteries that ALFRED—deservedly called THE GREAT—became king of Wessex by the death of his brother ÆTHELRED.

Alfred was then 22 years old, but he had already done enough to make all men regard him as the one hope of his people and the only man who, under God, could be their leader and champion in the struggle that had now begun in earnest against the Danes. This is not the place to say much about King Alfred—the hero king who rises out of the mists of bygone centuries as a figure of colossal proportions, and who, when all the mists are cleared away, still stands forth as the Christian ruler of his people, large of heart and clear of brain and dauntless in courage, with a patriot's love and zeal for England's welfare. But it must be told that for eight years after the first suppression of the monasteries, as I have called it, which marks an era in the history of East Anglia, there was ceaseless war between Alfred and the Danes, whose king was Guthorm, and that this warfare came to a close at last by a peace that was made at Wedmore in Somersetshire about the middle of June, 878. The terms of the peace were that Guthorm the Dane was to leave Wessex and was to keep East Anglia, together with a large portion of other territory north of the Humber and south of the Stour, and leave the rest of England to Alfred and those who stood by him. But the most memorable condition of the peace was that Guthorm the Dane should give up his heathenism and accept the Gospel as the religion of his people. Accordingly, when the

peace was made, Guthorm was baptised into the Faith of Christ, and Alfred stood as his godfather, and he took the new name of Athelstan. Once during his latter years he broke the peace which he had made, but it seems it was only once, and we know not the cause. For ten years he ruled as king, and he died in 890. "He *abode* in East Anglia" the Chronicle says, and it adds significantly, "he first *settled* that country."

For thirty years and more after Guthorm-Athelstan's death, East Anglia was wholly Danish, and only rare notices occur of what was going on within her borders. We hear nothing of the Christian bishops who ruled over the diocese, but it is almost certain that Christianity, so far from declining, became more and more generally accepted ; and that after a certain rough fashion the Danes became evangelised,¹ and that churches continued to be built, and even some monasteries were revived. We hear no more of any bishop of Dunwich ; it is probable that the town seriously declined in prosperity and importance during the Danish occupation and that the incursions of the sea wrought tremendous loss to the trade and shipping. Meanwhile the position of Elmham in the middle of Norfolk gave it great advantage as the site for a bishop's see, and when the East Anglian bishops once more come before us in the records, they are bishops of Elmham and as such apparently bishops of the whole of East Anglia.

The Danish power received a tremendous reverse

¹ Odo, Dunstan's predecessor in the archbishopric of Canterbury, was a Dane.

just fifty years after the cruel raid against the monasteries. It was the great Alfred's son, Edward the Elder, who smote them in the year 921, and he brought them under subjection, and from that time East Anglia became English once more. Soon after this event we meet again with the name of an East Anglian bishop, and a notable man he was. Deodred, or Theodred, was bishop of London as early as 926, and he continued to fill that see as late as 951; but London was not the only see over which he presided. He seems to have been bishop of Elmham as well,¹ and when he died he made certain bequests to his eastern diocese in his will, which is still preserved. In this will he speaks of the *Minster* in connexion with HOXNE in Suffolk, "at my bishopric," but it is not known where the *Minster* was. While Deodred was bishop, that great revival of monasticism began all over England which was destined to work such momentous changes in the social and intellectual life of our fathers during the centuries that followed. The Danish suppression had produced very important results. In many cases there had been frightful slaughter of the monks; in others there had been time for them to escape, though always there had been ruthless pillage and devastation. The churches

¹ See Kemble in the "Proceedings of the Arch. Inst.," 184, p. 53. Deodred is clearly the Bishop of London who was found fault with *by the Londoners* for spending so much money on a shrine over St. Edmund's body at Bury. They were jealous of the favour shown to the eastern diocese. Malmesbury, G. P., p. 154. As to one bishop holding two sees, Dunstan himself, six years after the death of Deodred, held the bishopric of Worcester with that of London.

and other monastic buildings had sometimes been left standing (when the flames had been more merciful than the robbers), and in a few cases even the libraries were spared ; but the life of the monasteries had really been crushed out, and the very name of monastery was preserved only as giving a title to the ownership of lands : the abbots and monks, if there were any that called themselves so, being really secular priests¹ and clerks.

In the tenth century a feeling grew that in the then condition of the Church and the world, there was a need for the revival of the cloister life and of all the good that the cloister life represented, and soon the revival came. The great leader of the movement was Æthelwald, bishop of Winchester, and his great supporter (though a far less uncompromising and furious supporter than has hitherto been generally believed²) was Dunstan, abbot of Glastonbury, and eventually archbishop of Canterbury. The struggle for the revival of the monasteries was mixed up with another struggle with which it had no necessary connexion,—I mean the struggle to prevent the marriage of the clergy. One of the reasons why monasticism had so completely broken up in England after the Danish suppression in 867, was that there was no

¹ As the terms will often be used hereafter, it may be as well to explain here, that the *Regulars* were those who lived under a rule (*regula*). The *Seculars* were those who were the *worldly* clergy,—parish priests or others not attached to any religious order.

² “Dunstan in reality seems to have been much more of a statesman than of an ecclesiastic.”—E. W. Robertson’s “Hist. Essays,” p. 195.

uniformity in the *Rules* (*i.e.*, the Codes of Discipline) under which the several monasteries were governed. Any monastery might be founded with a rule of its own, and the rules were very different in their stringency. When Bishop Æthelwald began his revival, he wished to introduce one rule which should take effect in all English monasteries, and this rule was the famous rule of St. Benedict, which, accordingly, he introduced first into the monasteries of Glastonbury and Abingdon. When he had succeeded so far, he turned his attention to the great eastern monasteries which had been so ruthlessly dealt with nearly a century before, and by his influence Ely and Peterborough and Thorney and Crowland rose up from their decayed condition, and were all re-established under the Benedictine rule. There was a great deal of strong feeling for and against this revival of the monasteries, but it seems that the leading men in East Anglia were in the main, in favour of the monks, and that they supported the new order of things.¹ Their chief was ÆTHELWINE, called "the friend of God," who, I think, got his name because he showed himself the friend of monks, for he was, in fact, the founder of the afterwards famous abbey of Ramsey. The reorganisation of the great religious house at Bury St. Edmunds was not carried out for

¹ "Edgar, who had been as indolent in the matter as his archbishop [Dunstan] for the first four years of his reign, married the widow of the *East Anglian ealderman* in 964, and in the same year *Wulstan-at-Delham, a thegn of the eastern counties*, . . . bore to the bishop of Winchester the royal sanction to commence his reforms."—Robertson, *u. s.*

nearly fifty years after this, and in the meantime a body of secular canons kept up a form of religious life in what appears to have been originally a conventual building. It is probable that many of these canons were married, and they lived as the canons in our cathedrals would live now if their number were increased to the full complement originally contemplated by the statutes of cathedrals of the new foundation, and if residence within the precincts were made compulsory. As for the general body of the parochial clergy, they lived upon their benefices with their wives and families ; but in Dunstan's time, and in great measure in consequence of his vehement championship, a very strong prejudice began to be roused, not altogether on religious or sentimental grounds, against the marriage of the clergy, and a passionate opposition, amounting almost to a persecution, was stirred up against all who were not prepared to advocate clerical celibacy. The monks increased in number and influence, and, as they did so, it became more and more difficult for the advocates of Christian liberty in the matter to hold their ground or to get a hearing, until at last the family life of the old parsonages disappeared, and it was only after the final suppression of the monasteries that it revived.

Meanwhile, during the thirty years that Dunstan was archbishop of Canterbury, the tide of popular feeling in favour of the conventual life continued always rising. Monasteries grew up as if by magic, some from their ashes, some in spots where no religious house had been known before. The conflict with heathenism was at an end ; the world would not

last much longer ; was not the thousandth year of grace at hand ? As for houses and lands, who that had lived through the troublous times, or looked forward to what seemed likely to come, could feel much security in the tenure by which he held them ? How much better to surrender houses and lands to the glory of God and the service and support of those whose prayers and promises rose up day and night with incense of perpetual adoration to the throne of Heaven ! Just when this storm of fervour was at its height, a new swarm of Danes came pouring into England. King Sweyn sailed up the Yare, and burned Norwich and Thetford, and laid the country desolate with fire and sword. He found a huge spoil in EAST ANGLIA. We read that the churches were pillaged, and the monks carried off, and their houses sacked. Six years after, the Danes came again ; this time they landed at Ipswich, and the chronicle significantly adds, that “ they even went into the wild fens, and they destroyed men and cattle, and burned through the fens.” It was worth their while ; for the great abbey of Peterborough had by this time revived, and Ælfsy, the abbot, was a man of power and wealth, and though his monastery had not grown to the grandeur that it attained twenty years after this, yet the abbey of Peterborough was even then a mighty institution, and the Fen country of EAST ANGLIA was looked upon as a kind of Holy Land. King Sweyn died in 1014, and his son, the great Cnut, became king. In three years he found himself undisputed master of England, and before his death his sway extended over Scotland, and Denmark, and Norway,

too. In the very year that he became supreme lord of England, he founded the abbey of ST. BENEDICT AT HULM,—the enthusiasm of the cloister had mastered the great warrior's heart. The new abbey, like almost all those that had preceded it, was set down in the heart of the Norfolk Broads, and the buildings rose up from the ooze of the desolate swamp where the sluggish Bure annually overflows its banks, and for miles the country round in winter-time is under water. There, in the hideous solitude, the number of monks had increased so greatly under the favour of the king, that in a few years twelve of them could be spared without difficulty to take the place of the canons who were ejected as usurpers from the now-restored abbey of St. Edmund's Bury; and there to this day the foundations of the vast monastery may be traced, the enormous mass of concrete which served as the foundation of the conventual church still defying all the ravages of time. Meanwhile, though Sweyn and Cnut were held to be good Christian kings,—for their sins in one direction were held to be condoned for the sake of their virtues in another,—they seem to have ordered the affairs of the Church after a somewhat high-handed fashion. They appointed to bishoprics as they pleased, and removed those whom they had appointed when they pleased, and there was strange confusion. Thus we hear of ÆLFGAR, whom men called the alms-giver, dying as bishop of EAST ANGLIA on Christmas Day, 1021, though ÆLFWIN¹ is said to have been appointed

¹ He had been a monk at Ely.

bishop five years before, and is expressly mentioned as then beginning to build the church of St. Edmund at Bury, which was not finished till 1032. It seems that STIGAND, whom the Chronicle calls "Cnut's priest," was the king's chief adviser in all matters ecclesiastical; and when Cnut died, in 1035, STIGAND's influence did not at all diminish.

While HARDACNUT, who succeeded his father, was away in Denmark, STIGAND did pretty much what he pleased; and when in December, 1038, ÆLFRIC, bishop of Elmham, died, STIGAND intruded himself into the vacant see; but this could not be borne, and for some reason that has not been recorded he was thrust out of the bishopric, then, and one GRIMKETEL was appointed in his room, who, they say, had purchased his preferment with gold. After awhile GRIMKETEL was ejected in his turn, and thereupon STIGAND recovered the bishopric, and held it till such time as the archbishopric of Canterbury fell vacant, whereupon he obtained that too, and held it, with the sees of Winchester and East Anglia, for a while. This was too much for the king, and STIGAND had to resign the East Anglian bishopric, though he contrived to secure it for his brother, ÆGELMAR or AYLMER, who was bishop of ELMHAM when William the Conqueror came across the sea, and those great changes began in Church and State which by that time were sorely needed. Very soon after the Conqueror's coming, Archbishop STIGAND fell into disgrace, and he and his brother, AYLMER, were involved in the same ruin, both being deposed from their bishoprics. This was in

the year 1070, just four years after the battle of Hastings. In the room of Bishop Aylmer, the Conqueror appointed his own chaplain, HERFAST, an Italian, to the bishopric,—the first foreigner who had ever presided over an East Anglian diocese. But the time was drawing near when the title of bishop of Elmham was to pass away, as the title of bishop of Dunwich had passed, and HERFAST was the last East Anglian bishop who was called by that name. Thus with the Norman Conquest we have come to a time when, in more senses than one, the old order has changed. The “bridal dawn of thunder-peals” which, the poet tells us, is wont to usher in a new era was not wanting; and perhaps it is as well that we know no more of how things really were going than we do. And yet as we look back upon all the suffering and the wrong, the cruelty and carnage and oppression, the treachery and grossness, and all the unutterable sorrow, there does stand up before us, witnessing for the Kingdom of Righteousness, a succession of men of faith and prayer who, from generation to generation, did *something* to raise the hopes and aspirations of their fellows, and to do battle for goodness and truth. They did not live in vain; they laid the foundations, and other men have builded thereon.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE AIR BEGAN TO CLEAR.

IN the twenty-five years during which Edward the Confessor reigned over England, there were no less than twelve popes of Rome, real or pretended. It was a time of grievous corruption and anarchy throughout Christendom; for neither in the Church nor in the State did men know how to govern themselves. Priests and people were lost without a personal head over them. Where the ruler was weak or wicked, the people perished. During all those shameful conflicts and wars and abominations which make up the history of the papacy during the first half of the eleventh century, and as a consequence of them, the necessities of the popes had become more and more urgent and their poverty extreme. Meanwhile, the property of the Church in other lands had gone on increasing in value, and the clergy, as a class, were amply endowed. Whatever may have been the case in earlier times, it is plain that when William the Duke became William the King of England, a very large proportion of the beneficed clergy in England, Germany, Flanders, and North Italy were married men. But the tenure by which a clergyman held his benefice was anomalous. The science

of law was as yet in its infancy, and the parson who was inducted into a benefice and enjoyed it as his freehold by virtue of his *office* might easily convince himself that while he held office he might do with it as he pleased. When a married clergyman saw his children growing up around him, and knew that after his death they would be unprovided for, his temptation was to deal with his freehold as if it were his own, and to alienate from the Church all he could lay his hands on.¹ The temptation was too often yielded to. We hear even of the sacred vessels being made away with by needy priests, or their wives and families. Nor was this all; the relations between the patron and the incumbent of a benefice were vague and undefined. The one had something to give which was valuable, the other had something to receive which was worth purchase. The one might be needy, the other greedy, and the vulgarest bargaining was apt to ensue. A man grown desperate by the needs of an increasing family was willing to stake his all as an investment in a rich living; or worse, he might go to the Jews and borrow the money which the patron in the benefice was willing enough to receive. Sometimes, too, when the parson had no capital and no means of borrowing, even a worse compact ensued, and patron and incumbent entered into covenants more or less open and avowed, whereby the income of the Church was to be divided

¹ "Sed erant religiosi et dignissimi clerici, qui tamen thesauros suos avidis adquirebant cordibus non ad ecclesiæ honorem sed suis dare *solebant uxoribus*."—"Vita Oswaldi," apud Stubbs, "Memorials of St. Dunstan," p. lxxxiii., n.

between the two, one share falling to the man who performed the duties of the clerical office, the other returned to him in whose gift the preferment lay. The evil grew to huge proportions, and the better feelings of the laity revolted against the increase of these *Simoniacal* proceedings, whereby the possessions of the clergy were being seriously diminished, and the danger of the maintenance of the parish priests being altogether alienated at last seemed to be a real and pressing one. The root and source of all the mischief seemed, to the ardent and reforming spirits of the time, to be the marriage of the clergy ; and when the remarkable revival of the monastic life and the monastic spirit began to make itself felt through all classes, and a wave of fanaticism passed over Europe, which the genuine enthusiasm of the pietists of Clugny and Camaldoli had first set moving, a phrenzy against the married clergy began to be roused, and speedily all the thunders of ecclesiastical denunciation were hurled without pity against the two classes who were proclaimed as the corrupters of the age—the *Simoniacal* buyers and sellers, and the priests, whose *concubines* (for so they called them) were said to be the bane of the Church of God.

But abuses die hard, and in East Anglia the monastic fervour of Dunstan and Æthelwald does not appear to have aroused much respect. In the century preceding the Conquest, though St. Edmund's Bury rose to importance, and though King Cnut founded the abbey of St. Benets at Hulme, yet it is clear that the monastic spirit had not taken so great a hold of the people as elsewhere, and that the

parochial clergy were occupying an exceptionally strong position.

Hitherto, the East Anglian bishops had been Englishmen with insular prejudices. In the strife of parties at Rome they had taken no part. They enjoyed a quiet independence ; they knew nothing of the “habits of constant reference to the papal see” which came among us later ; they had something to lose and nothing to gain by running backwards and forwards to Rome. If the truth must be told, it seems that the last East Anglian bishops were not men who were much better or worse than their age. The charge of Simony that more than one of them underlie can hardly be groundless : but in an age when it was no bar to an ecclesiastic becoming archbishop of Rouen that he had a wife who bore him children ; when it did not hinder Thomas from being archbishop of York, that he was the son of a priest ; when Milan swarmed with married clergy, who obeyed Herbert, their married bishop, it was no scandal that the last two bishops of East Anglia appointed by the saintly King Edward, and the first bishop appointed by the Conqueror, were all married men. These bishops ruled over a body of parochial clergy, scarcely, if at all, less numerous than those from whom the bishop of Norwich now claims obedience. In the county of Suffolk alone there were at least 364 churches ; in Norfolk there were at least 317. The passion for building churches in East Anglia during the eleventh century appears, from the Domesday survey, to have become almost a mania. We meet with instances of clergymen en-

dowing churches which they had built, and bestowing manors on those which others had raised. If there was Simony among them, there was something better too, and if there was buying and selling of benefices and bishoprics—an evil obviously to be deplored,—yet the inference is that the clergy belonged to the upper rather than the lower strata of society, and were therefore presumably on a higher level of intelligence and culture than their flocks. Some of them, we hear, were very poor: it was inevitable that this should be so. Some of them, too, were unlearned; and among the ecclesiastics who had been bred up in the better regulated monasteries and schools of learning on the Continent there was a disposition to make out that even the bishops were wanting in solid learning.¹ But, on the whole, things appear not to have been so bad but that they might easily have been worse; and, relatively to the rest of the community, it is probable—*mutatis mutandis*—that the clergy, at the time of the Conquest, occupied pretty much the same position, morally and intellectually, that they do now.

Bishop HERFAST seems to have been appointed to

¹ Lanfranc seems to have been given to a pedantic display of his “new learning,” and to have taken pleasure in showing his intellectual superiority to other bishops. His conduct to Herfast, bishop of Elmham, must have been outrageously insulting (Malmesbury, G. P., p. 150). He even sneered at Wulstan, bishop of Worcester, for his “*inscientia literarum*” (p. 284), though there certainly was no foundation for the taunt. When Anselm died and a discussion arose about his successor some affirmed that there were many Englishmen who were just as learned as Lanfranc (p. 126).

his bishopric early in 1070; for on the 29th August of that year he assisted at the consecration of Lanfranc as archbishop of Canterbury.¹ When he himself was consecrated we are not told; but when, according to the fashion of the time, a copy of the Evangelists was put into his hands as part of the ceremony, and he opened it at random to gain what was called a "prognostic" of his acceptance by Almighty God, his eyes fell upon the awful words, *Not this man, but Barabbas!* How he received the terrible omen we can only guess. Strong in the favour of the Conqueror, he was not slow in asserting himself; and though, at the very time of his entering upon his episcopate, Leofwin, bishop of Lichfield, was deposed and compelled to retire into a monastery because he was a married ecclesiastic, HERFAST was unmolested and left a son behind him who inherited some of his father's lands.

When HERFAST entered upon the duties of his episcopate, Alexander II. was pope at Rome. As Anselm, bishop of Lucca, he had been intimately associated with Peter Damiani and the great Hildebrand in more than one enterprise for the reform of the Church. He was the first pope elected by the cardinals without dictation or interference of the civil power; the first of that succession of extraordinary men who made the papacy what it became in the thirteenth century; the first, too, who sent into England a papal legate to settle affairs which English kings and English bishops were supposed to be unable to settle for

¹ Stubbs's "Registrum Sac. Anglic."

themselves. His election to the papacy was one of the turning-points in the history of the world. It was inevitable that Alexander should be a friend of the monasteries, and he had not been two years pope before he granted to the great abbey of Clugny one of those mischievous exemptions from episcopal visitations which produced so much evil in the after time;¹ the precedent was a bad one, but it was speedily followed.² It looks as if the Conqueror's policy aimed at raising up the power of the abbots as a check upon the formidable wealth, authority, and influence of the bishops, and, as these latter claimed independence of all *secular* jurisdiction, so to make the former independent of *episcopal* control. HERFAST had scarcely been established in his bishopric before he was startled by the discovery that the abbot of St. Edmund's Bury claimed to be exempt from episcopal authority.

HERFAST was very angry and set himself to resist the insidious encroachment. Baldwin, the abbot of St. Edmunds, was a man of mark and had acquired a wide reputation for his skill in medicine, being esteemed one of the greatest physicians of his time.³ He had many powerful friends, he had travelled much, and had been ordained priest at Rome by the pope himself.⁴ His life from all that appears was

¹ Stubbs's "Introd. to Mem. of R. H.," p. xxvi. *et seq.*; Giesler, ii. 419; Hallam, M.A. ii. 168.

² On the exemptions of Battle Abbey cf. Eadmer with Selden's notes, p. 105. Freeman iv., p. 409.

³ Malmesbury, G. P.

⁴ Lanfranc, Ep. xxx.

blameless. Nevertheless, HERFAST did not shrink from a conflict which at that time was unprecedented in England, and he insisted on his right of visiting the abbey and on exercising authority over all priests, whether monks or not, resident in his diocese. On Baldwin protesting against this claim, both parties appealed to the king.

Matters were at this point, when the Revolt of Maine compelled William to cross the sea in 1073. The king, before he left England, had ordered the parties to await his return till such time as he should arbitrate between them, or (as he appears to have added) till Lanfranc should decide the dispute. HERFAST knew that in Lanfranc he had no personal friend, and without waiting till William should return, and perhaps fearing that the Archbishop's decision would be sure to be given against him, he excommunicated the abbot's contumacious priests, though Lanfranc appears to have already started to settle the quarrel.¹ Lanfranc had got as far as Freckenham, in Suffolk, where the bishop of Rochester had a house,² when he fell ill, and Abbot Baldwin was called in to attend him.³ Shortly after Lanfranc appears to have proceeded to Bury and given his judgment on the question in dispute. Whatever the judgment was, it did not satisfy HERFAST, nor indeed does it seem to have been wholly in favour of Baldwin. The dispute was not ended, and a report of the case was transmitted to Rome. Gregory VII. had by this time succeeded to the papacy, and on the 20th November,

¹ Lanfranc, Ep. xviii.

² D.D.B. 381, a.

³ Lanfranc, Ep. xix.

1074, the pope sent an angry letter to Lanfranc commenting severely upon HERFAST's conduct, supporting the abbot against the East-Anglian bishop, and assuring the latter that in case of his showing himself refractory both parties must appear in person at Rome.¹ Lanfranc had no further choice in the matter; but when Baldwin sent one of his clerks to HERFAST with letters from the archbishop in which he had pronounced his final award, HERFAST appears to have lost his temper: he broke out into violent language against Lanfranc himself, dismissed the messenger with insults and personal violence, and denied that he was in any way bound to obey any archbishop in England, be he who he might.² The sequel of the story has not come down to us, but it is clear that the quarrel proceeded to great lengths; and in the recriminatory letter which Lanfranc addressed to the Bishop HERFAST, he charges him, on hearsay, with passing his time in dicing and other reprehensible amusements, recommends him to read more and trifle less, and adopts the tone of a superior scornfully rebuking a dependent for misbehaviour. Such a correspondence was not likely to increase a cordial understanding between HERFAST and the primate, and it must have been after this business, and in consequence of it, that HERFAST allowed himself to be betrayed into certain irregularities of which Lanfranc again had to complain.³ HERFAST, himself a married man, seems to have thrown the weight of his influence into the cause of those clergy who maintained the

¹ Ep. xx.² Ep. xxiii.³ Ep. xxi.

lawfulness of matrimony. He ordained one man as deacon and another as priest, though each had a wife from whom he was unwilling to separate. Again Lanfranc interfered,¹ and with no hesitation pronounced that neither should discharge any ecclesiastical function, but should in fact be degraded. After this we hear little more of Bishop HERFAST, whose episcopate is memorable for the first instance of the exemption of a monastery from episcopal visitation, and for one of the last instances of an attempt to uphold the liberty of clerical wedlock. He was present at the great council summoned by the primate in 1075,² and it was in obedience to the enactments of that council that in the year 1078 he transferred the East-Anglian bishopric from Elmham to Thetford, which had become a central and flourishing town. He died in 1084.³ His episcopate covers fourteen memorable years of the Conqueror's reign. It was only a few months before his consecration that the Danes made their last raid upon East Anglia and received their crushing defeat at the hands of Ralph of Wader, "the one English traitor at Senlac"—who had for his treason been rewarded with the Earldom of Norfolk.

It was in the sixth year of his episcopate that the last and most formidable revolt against the great king was organised by this same Earl Ralph, and that Norwich Castle was defended by his newly-wedded bride for three months, and surrendered only on

¹ Ep. xxi. and xxii.

² Malmesbury, G.P. 66, n. 1.

³ Le Neve, quoting Wharton A.S.

favourable conditions at last. All through HERFAST'S time the fashion of building churches continued, but not one single monastic foundation is recorded to have been raised. The fact, viewed by the light which HERFAST'S career affords us, is significant. It was not till the days of his successor that the king's commissioners went through East Anglia to carry out the great survey, which affords indications of a period of suffering and impoverishment having been experienced among the towns of Norfolk, during the bishop's term of office. Norwich had seriously suffered from the great rebellion. Thetford, though now the episcopate seat, had declined in wealth and population since the Confessor's days; on the other hand, Elmham had increased in prosperity and importance by reason of the residence of the bishop there. It seems difficult to understand why Norwich should not have been chosen before Thetford as the East Anglian bishop's residence, unless it was because the stately Church of the Holy Trinity at Thetford was the most spacious edifice in the diocese,¹ and appeared to offer itself as the best existing substitute for a cathedral, or because the king desired to show his displeasure at the part the Norwich burghers had taken in the eastern rebellion.

The king was away in Normandy when HERFAST died, and no successor was appointed to the see till his return in the following year. When the great assembly was held at Gloucester about Christmas,

¹ Henry of Hunt, p. 165.

WILLIAM, called *de Bella Fago* or *de Beau Feu*, was appointed bishop of Thetford. He, too, was one of the king's chaplains. It seems probable that he was married.¹ He was high in the Conqueror's favour, and was enriched by him as a proof of his regard. He left his accumulations in great measure to the endowment of his bishopric. He was one of those who were present at William Rufus's first court, held in 1087. Of his administration we know nothing. Its period was fruitful in miseries for the diocese; the first year was a year of pestilence and famine, and, when the rebellion of the Norman earls against William Rufus broke out in 1088, Roger Bigod, from his castle at Norwich, issued forth to lay waste the country round, and to levy black-mail upon the wretched people. For five short years Bishop William held the see; his episcopate was signalised by the founding of the great priory of Castle Acre.

Since the days of Cnut no religious house of any importance had been set up in East Anglia. During the reign of Edward the Confessor it was not likely that Monasticism would flourish while the province was under the control of married bishops; but if we could believe what has been asserted, that towards the close of William's reign a mysterious shudder of repentance passed through the mind of the king and communicated itself to his rough barons, we might easily find evidence for such a belief in the setting up the Cluniac priory of Castle Acre by William de Warenne. Splendid as are the ruins of this foundation,

¹ "Norf. Ant. Misc.," vol. i.; Mumford's "Domesday," p. 24; Sir H. Ellis, apud Planché, ii. 283.

it was originally but a cell of Lewes, the first Cluniac house in England. The earnest attempt made in the tenth century to throw new life and reality into monasticism had met with a response on our side of the Channel; for the Cluniacs aimed at being the reformers of the religious life of their time; and if the flame that they fanned into a blaze for a little while, soon died out and new reformers were needed to take the place of the old, this is only what is always happening. Each generation has its own work to do, and must needs do it in its own way.

During the Conqueror's reign, there had been no buying or selling of bishoprics.¹ William had taken a pride in keeping at his court a body of ecclesiastics who were before their age in learning and intellect. They were all men of wealth or birth or exceptional culture, and in his appointments to bishoprics he consulted only his own pleasure and his sense of the fitness of his nominees for the posts to which he assigned them. But William, the son, was a different man from his father, and his needs made him greedy and rapacious. With him the vile practice of selling the great offices in the Church and in the State came back again, and bishoprics were once more offered to the highest bidder. The price was always enormous, and only they who had inherited large fortunes, or amassed them while servants of the venal and profligate court, were in a position to treat for the larger prizes.² When Lanfranc died, on the

¹ Stubbs, "Const. Hist." vol. i., § 101.

² See Palgrave, "Eng. and Normandy," vol. iv., c. ii. See, too, Stubbs, vol. i., p. 299.

24th May, 1089, the king had no further compunction in dealing with Church preferments according to his policy or his whim. For more than four years the archbishopric was vacant, in the interval only two bishoprics fell in,—that of Chichester, which was retained in the king's hands for three years, and that of Thetford by the death of WILLIAM DE BEAUFEU in 1091.

How long the East Anglian see might have remained without a bishop we need not speculate, for a candidate for the vacant office soon appeared able and willing to pay such *fees for entering upon the ecclesiastical fief* as the king thought proper to demand.¹ This was HERBERT, abbot of Ramsey, a man whom “the shafts of truth feathered with scandal” have not spared. HERBERT DE LOSINGA, for that was his name, was the son of one Robert de Losinga, who appears, late in life, to have assumed the monk's cowl on his being appointed abbot of Winchester. Of the family from which he sprang nothing is known; but the bishop, in his later years, speaks of his high birth, his great connexions, and his large resources, with grateful pride. It is clear that, from his earliest years, he enjoyed all the advantages of careful education which were then to be had, and, to do him justice, he seems to have made the most of his opportunities. His handsome person, captivating manners, and remarkable conversational powers, fitted him to shine as a courtier, but the scholarly tastes which he had acquired in boyhood led him early to take upon

¹ Stubbs, i. 299.

him monastic vows, and he became a monk in the splendid abbey of Fécamp, where, according to his own account, he passed the happiest days of his life. It is probable that he was already at Fécamp when the Conqueror kept his Easter there in 1067, and may then have come under the king's notice as a young scholar of promise.¹ Subsequently, while prior of the same religious house, he seems to have been brought into intimate relations with the king during his last campaign; and William Rufus, on succeeding his father, straightway made him one of his chaplains, and appointed him abbot of the rich Benedictine monastery of Ramsay. Here he remained three years, and on the death of WILLIAM DE BEAUFEU, he was promoted to the bishopric of THETFORD, as has been told. He was consecrated by Thomas, archbishop of York, and with him, as it seems, was consecrated Ralph Luffa, the newly-appointed bishop of Chichester. This was in the year 1091. Archbishop Lanfranc had been dead for two years, and the king showed no sign of intending to name a successor; the revenues of the see of Canterbury were paid into the royal exchequer, and the estates in many instances were bestowed upon the creatures of the Court.

For two years more things went from bad to worse. Bishop HERBERT kept himself quiet, but he must have been shocked and horrified by the abominations that were going on. The country was given over to cruelty and oppression of every kind. In the Church there were anarchy and licence. Early in

¹ Freeman, iv., pp. 87 *et seq.*

1093 prayers were offered up throughout the country that God would move the king to make choice of a fit man for the archbishopric.¹ Rufus made himself merry in his grim way, and swore by the Holy Face of Lucca that there should be no archbishop of Canterbury save himself. A few weeks afterwards he was struck down by a dangerous sickness, his recovery seemed hopeless, he became agitated by terror and remorse. For once in his life he relented, and on the 6th March he nominated Anselm to the primacy. There was great joy in England. Now, men thought, there was hope of better times. But Anselm had no desire for the exalted post which he was compelled to accept sorely against his will. He made his own conditions. Rufus gave a half promise that what he asked should be acceded to. But the king recovered, and the evil spirit came back to his heart. Anselm took his stand bravely. What he believed to be right, that must be clung to; with the fear of God before his eyes, the fear of man faded away. These two last-appointed bishops, Ralph Luffa of Chichester and HERBERT of THETFORD—they who, on the 4th of December, 1093, had placed their hands upon his head and taken part in his consecration—had they paid money down for the bishoprics? Had they accepted their sees as if they were only temporal lords, and taken the staff of office and the episcopal ring from the king, who was a layman after all, and a plunderer of the heritage of God? Let them look to it. Both had flagrantly disobeyed the decrees of the

¹ Eadmer, pp. 15, 16.

Roman Synod of September, 1089, which forbade that any ecclesiastical person should accept investiture at the hands of a layman, be he who he might. Let them humble themselves and repent, give back to the tyrant what he had no right to grant, and seek pardon from the pope of Rome.

If Anselm solemnly urged this plea, it is only what we should have expected from him. One thing is certain, that both bishops did actually offer to resign each his staff and ring to Rufus. In the case of the Bishop of THETFORD, it was accepted, and the king plucked the staff from his hand; in the case of Bishop Ralph, when he stood up, huge giant as he was, and face to face with the furious tyrant, drew the ring from his finger and tendered his staff, Rufus seems to have bidden him keep what he had. Rufus wanted Anselm's ring and staff; he was no nearer getting them after flouting Bishop HERBERT—was it worth his while to repeat a bad move?

The taking away of Bishop HERBERT's staff produced a profound impression. The contemporary chronicler thought it worth his while to make a record of the fact. The event seems to have occurred early in 1094, for HERBERT took part in the consecration of Anselm at Canterbury on the 3rd December of the previous year, and his name is absent from the list of bishops who assisted at the consecration of Robert Bloet, as bishop of Lincoln, on the 12th February following. Unless there be some confusion in the dates, he must in the interval have slipped away to Rome. Here he presented himself before the pope, made his peace with the awful Pontiff, and in April

he was at home again. On the 9th of that month we find him no longer bishop of Thetford—he appears henceforth as bishop of Norwich.¹ How the negotiations were carried on, how the king was induced to sanction the removal of the see to the capital of East Anglia, and whether it was one of those matters which the papal legates arranged at their coming when they brought Anselm his pall, it is idle to speculate upon—we shall never know. This we do know, that in the year when the council of Clermont proclaimed the truce of God, and while men began to buckle on their armour for the first crusade, HERBERT LOSINGA was bishop not of Dunwich, or Elmham, or Thetford, but was known as bishop of Norwich.

¹ I cannot withhold my suspicion that the accepted date is wrong, and that it should be 1095. This is not the place, however, to argue out the question. See Cotton, p. 54, and note the confusion in the chronology.

CHAPTER IV.

HERBERT LOSINGA, FOUNDER OF NORWICH.

AFTER the taking away of his staff, HERBERT the bishop passes out of sight for a while. The first crusade had begun. Robert Courthose, the Conqueror's eldest son, was the leader of that dreadful war, and had made his peace with his brother, William Rufus, and sold his rights for gold. England and Englishmen cared little about that first crusade, and in East Anglia they were not likely to care more for such a cause because Ralph, the traitor earl of Norfolk, was one of those who took part in it. Robert Courthose started from Normandy to assume the command of the rabble of Crusaders in the autumn of 1096. In that same year, Bishop HERBERT laid the foundation-stone of Norwich Cathedral. During all the centuries when East Anglia had had bishops presiding over her numerous clergy, there is nothing to show that anything like what we now understand by a cathedral church had ever existed. The only notice of a "Minster" which has come down to us is one which Bishop THEODRED mentions in his will as existing near Hoxne in Suffolk.¹ There appear to have been important churches at Dunwich, and at least one large one at Thetford, but the

¹ See p. 29.

notice of Elmham, which occurs in Domesday, leaves the impression of its being the site of an episcopal mansion in the midst of its extensive woods, rather than a place notable for ecclesiastical buildings.

Bishop HERBERT no sooner found himself established in his see, than he set himself to supply the want of a cathedral church. There appears to have been an unimportant religious house occupying a portion of what is now the cathedral close, and was then called the Cowholme ; but its precincts were too small for any such gigantic undertaking as HERBERT contemplated, and his first difficulty was to acquire the necessary land. A site was, however, soon chosen. The river Wensum in its sluggish course towards the sea was stopped on the east by some high chalk cliffs, which turned the stream for a while in a southward direction. To the westward there stretched a huge morass, whose boundary on one side was the river, and on the other a slight eminence, called the Tombland, a kind of spur of the commanding height on which the great castle of Norwich rose. In the middle of this low ground the bishop, true to the traditions of the Benedictines, determined to plant his church.

The first stone was laid some time in 1096, *i.e.*, less than two years after HERBERT had been consecrated bishop of the see, and this at a time when the land was groaning with exceeding misery, and the tyranny of the king was impoverishing all classes. The time might seem to be inopportune, but HERBERT knew that life is short, and knew that he must not wait. There had been two dreadful seasons. The king was oppressing all classes ; his treasurer was grinding

the faces of the rich and of the poor. Money was very scarce, but the bishop's own resources were enormous. On the whole, it is probable that the plan of the cathedral was conceived in its entirety, and the vast foundations excavated as they now exist, by the audacious architect at first starting. In the absence of any serviceable quarry in East Anglia, the stone required was imported from Normandy, and a canal was cut from the Wensum, enabling the vessels to unload their burden where now stands the lower close. The works went on with amazing rapidity, and the cathedral rose up as if by magic, its extreme length attaining to 407 feet, without reckoning the Lady Chapel, which has disappeared. Concurrently with the construction of the church, a palace for the bishops was rising on the north, and the monastic buildings for seventy monks were rapidly being built on the southern side; for the services of the new church, and the gorgeous ritual which it was intended to keep up in it, would inevitably necessitate a large body of officiating clergy, and these must be members either of a *Collegium* of canons living under a *Rule*, or a brotherhood of monks subject to an abbot or prior. Bishop HERBERT being himself a monk, and loyal to the great house and the great order to which he owed so much, there could be no doubt who would be the ministering servants of the church at Norwich. The cathedral was to be the centre of a monastic institution, the monks were to be subject to the ancient Benedictine rule under which HERBERT's own school of Fécamp was governed. The *de facto* head of the house would be the founder during his

lifetime, though the prior was technically the ruler of the community, elected by the whole body in chapter assembled, and irremovable by any external authority. The constitution of Norwich was almost precisely that of Canterbury, and HERBERT was scrupulously careful in providing separate estates for the bishop and the monastery. While the building proceeded, the bishop had his hands full ; during the five years that elapsed between the laying of the foundation-stone and the roofing-in of the choir (when the church was consecrated) prodigious sums of money were collected. Rufus is the only one of the Norman kings who founded no religious house, and who systematically pillaged churches and monasteries ; yet even Rufus is expressly said to have contributed to the building of Norwich Cathedral, and his brother, who succeeded him, gave money and lands. The citizens of Norwich, the great lords who held their fiefs under the king, the clergy of the diocese,—all who had but little to give, and many who had nothing to spare, brought each and all their offerings.

Abroad, the crusaders were slaying and plundering ; Robert Courthrose, achieving at last his hideous triumph, and Urban the pope surviving it just fifteen days. At home, a wail of suffering went up to heaven from a people whom the pitiless taxes and the grievous famine well-nigh reduced to despair. In 1098, nearly all the crops in the marsh-lands failed, and next year things were little better ; Anselm had been driven out of England, and Englishmen had no champion to plead for right and mercy. Bishops and abbots died, and the king seized their lands and let them out to arm ; it was a dreadful time, and yet that stupendous

mass rose higher and higher, the labour and the revenues of a province being devoted to the one great object which the bishop had persuaded himself was the glory of God. Doubtless the organisation of all this vast labour was a great boon to East Anglia. If there was famine elsewhere here, at any rate, there was work and pay, and in a time of much suffering, depression, and scarcity, the building of the cathedral came to the masses as a grand scheme for the relief of the destitute on which all who wanted it might find profitable employment. Thus the raising of that stupendous pile of buildings, of which little now remains but the church, must be regarded almost less as an architectural triumph, than a colossal industrial achievement such as only a man with a great genius for the organisation of labour would have undertaken or could have carried through. If the dates be rightly given, scarcely five years elapsed from the laying of the foundation stone to the consecration of the cathedral for divine worship, and though doubtless little more is implied by this than that the choir was roofed over, yet even so, the rapidity with which the work proceeded is astonishing. Nor was Norwich the only place that benefited by the bishop's activity. All through his episcopate he seems to have continued to find employment for the industrial army that looked to him for work and pay. At Elmham, though for long the site of the bishopric, there had been only a timber church; Bishop HERBERT built a worthier and more enduring edifice. At Lynn, the immense church of St. Margaret occupies the site and is the present representative of an older construction which HERBERT raised. At Yarmouth, too, he built the largest parish

church in England; and even at Norwich, on the other side of the Wensum, on a hill which once looked down upon the city, but which has long since been bodily carted away by the lime-burners, another church rose, possibly for the use of the camp of labourers, whom the citizens could not house, and for whom the high ground would afford a healthy and convenient place for temporary habitations. Nor was this all. The Benedictine order had, it was said, departed from the severity of the great founder's rule, and the monasteries were not what they had been, or what they should be; and an earnest attempt had been made to bring in a reform of monastic discipline :—that reform originated in the great religious house of Clugni, in the tenth century, and shortly after the Conquest some *Cluniac* monks were settled at Lewes in Sussex, who were the first bringers-in of the new rule. Up to this time, in the east of England, the founders of any new monastery had always sought out some forbidding solitude wherein the recluse might be removed from the snares of the world and its fascinations, but with the twelfth century comes in a new era. The monasteries may be said henceforth to take a new departure, and from this time religious houses began not uncommonly to be founded in the immediate vicinity of the towns. Till the building of Bishop HERBERT's great Benedictine Priory at Norwich, St. Edmunds Abbey had been the only monastery in East Anglia which was not far removed from town life; but in the twenty years that followed the consecration of the cathedral and the completion of the monastic buildings that were attached to it, the great Cluniac priory rose under the shadow of the mighty castle of the Earls of Warrene

at Castle Acre,¹ and another Cluniac house was founded by Roger Bigod at Thetford. A Benedictine house, subordinate to the Abbey of St. Albans, was built by Roger Bigod's daughter and her husband William de Albini² at Wymondham, and cells or subsidiary houses to the Norwich Priory were founded at Lynn and Hoxne. The tactics of the monastic orders seem to have undergone a change, when the savage tyrant William Rufus was dead and his accomplished brother had succeeded. It was less necessary than it had been for men who desired to live a religious life to retire into the wilderness—Nay!—it might be that the work of the “religious” was to prove themselves the salt of the earth, by acting upon the masses and raising their tone; but new wine cannot be put into old bottles, and in the next century the work was taken out of the hands of the monks properly so called; then religious enthusiasm showed itself in quite a new aspect, and the Franciscan and Dominican missionaries went forth to rescue from the kingdom of darkness the *townsmen* who were as sheep without shepherds. The true evangelisers of the masses were the friars.

Meanwhile, the example set by the bishop and the great lords acted as a stimulus upon others in East Anglia who had lands to alienate and money to spend. Possibly, too, there were some who by contributing

¹ Though Castle Acre was *founded* in the episcopate of Bishop William Beaufeu, the architecture of the remains proves that the *building* of the church dates many years later.

² He died on All Saints' Day (November 1), 1139, in the fifty-first year after he had founded Wymondham Abbey, says Oxnade, p. 51; *i.e.*, the foundation dates in 1089.

to the building or endowing a religious foundation, compounded for vows too hastily made to take part in the crusade. Whatever the motives may have been, or however it may be accounted for, the fact is plain, that besides the monastic houses already mentioned, at least six others were begun or completed during Bishop HERBERT's episcopate.¹ The commanding personality of the man and the enthusiasm which fired his whole life impressed themselves upon all who came in contact with him; the *furore* for building churches and monasteries which is so noticeable in East Anglia during HERBERT's episcopate must have been largely the result of the bishop's direct influence and example. But while throwing himself with earnestness and energy into all that concerned the welfare of his diocese, he exhibited that invariable characteristic of true genius—the power of taking delight in the most trifling pursuits of daily life and of finding pleasure in duties which only common men find “common.” He watched over the discipline of the monastery he had founded, personally directed the studies of the young people for whose education the convent school was carried on, was a frequent preacher and a busy correspondent. He had a keen appreciation of a joke, and, as a Latinist, was a far more elegant writer and far more accomplished scholar than was usual in his time. As a courtier, he was high in favour with Henry I. all through his life, and he appears to have been in personal attendance upon the Queen Matilda during her last hours. As a lover

¹ Binham, Aldeby, Bliburgh, Hempton, Heringfleet, Ixworth. To these may probably be added Eye and Pentney.

of books and patron of learning he was perhaps the foremost man in England of his time. It was undoubtedly a bad time for literature, but such as it was Herbert de Losinga added to it his share, and with the single exception of the great Anselm he was the only bishop of an English see who in that generation won any place at all in the republic of letters. In one of his enterprises he failed, and failed signally. He attempted what his predecessor had vainly tried to effect, to make the abbot of Bury and his convent subject to the visitation of the bishop of the see. But the wealth and influence and astuteness of the abbot and his agents were too much for any single bishop to cope with. The monks gained the day in East Anglia, as they gained the day in Canterbury a generation later. The time soon came when the abbot of Bury got to be regarded as a personage almost co-ordinate in power and influence with the bishop of Norwich.¹ Not for three centuries was any further attempt made to carry out any visitation of the great eastern monastery.

Bishop HERBERT died on the 22nd July, 1119, and was buried in his own cathedral. His monument is that glorious pile wherein his bones are laid: the church whose vast proportions have admitted no additions and whose main lines have been preserved almost unchanged for 800 years—the most purely Norman cathedral in Britain.

¹ I refer to the striking scene in Jocelin de Brakelond's "Chronicle," where Abbot Sampson wishes to take the cross, and Bishop John of Oxford resists him on the ground that the bishop and the abbot ought not *both to be absent together*.

CHAPTER V.

THE CENTURY AFTER THE FOUNDATION.

WHEN Bishop HERBERT died, King Henry was in Normandy. For three years he had been away from England, and no English bishops had been appointed in his absence. Robert de Limesey had died in 1117, but the see of Lichfield was left without its chief pastor. Norwich was vacant. Still the king made no sign, and the bad precedent of his brother's reign seemed to be ruling once again. In the spring of 1120, Geoffrey de Clive of Hereford died, and Hereford was without its bishop, the king still absent. In the autumn of that same year the weary French war came to an end, and Henry turned his face homewards. By the dreadful calamity of the "White Ship" foundering he was left childless. Early in the following year two of the vacant bishoprics were filled up—Hereford, in January, by Richard, a clerk of the signet, or member of the exchequer or chancery; Lichfield, in March, by the appointment of Robert Peeke, one of the royal chaplains. Still Norwich was unsupplied.

Practically, the regent during the king's absence was Roger, bishop of Salisbury, the great representative of the secular or statesman-school of Churchman, the man to whose genius both the Norman and

English exchequer owed their organisation, the uncompromising opponent of the monks and of everything that tended to increase the power and influence of the monastic bodies. The great priory of Norwich was a new foundation; it had flourished marvelously under Bishop HERBERT, it was prospering still. Bishop Roger would not have another monk-bishop in East Anglia, but it seems as if he hesitated before he recommended to the king the man upon whom he had fixed his eye.

The bishop of Salisbury had, as his archdeacon, Everard de Montgomery, a son of Roger, Lord of Belesme, by Adela, daughter of Everard de Puiset, whom he had married in 1082. He appears to have been a devout young man, inclined to superstition, with a taste for relics and the bones of saints. While the great minister was pursuing his course and governing the realm, he left the spiritual regimen of his own diocese to his archdeacon, and Everard was practically his vicar-general. Everard became one of the king's chaplains, but there his preferment stopped. There was a reason for this. The archdeacon's half-brothers had more than once stood forward as champions of the Feudatories, in their attempt to throw off the yoke which the kingly power imposed on them. Robert de Valence, the eldest of them, in 1101, Roger de Poitou and Arnoul, earl of Pembroke, in 1103, had each lost his English fiefs; and, though humbled, they and their treasons were not forgotten. Everard their half-brother might well be allowed to wait; and he had already wealth enough and to spare. He was now nearly

forty years old, and at last his time came. Bishop Roger thought he would prove no friend to monks; at any rate, he was no monk himself, but a secular in more senses than one. On the 12th June, 1121, EVERARD, the archdeacon, was consecrated Bishop of Norwich and soon entered upon his episcopacy. If Blomfield's authorities are to be trusted, he, like more than one of his predecessors, and, like his great patron the bishop of Salisbury, was a married man; surely a scandal and offence to HERBERT'S monks in the priory, but it could not be helped, and the bishop had strong friends.

Henry I. had contributed to raising this stupendous church and the monastic buildings adjoining. The king must have heard again and again of the wonderful pile that had continued growing to larger pretensions while he was away in Normandy, and the very next Christmas, after Bishop EVERARD'S consecration, he came down to spend his Christmas at Norwich, and thither the council was summoned to attend. A royal visit was a heavy tax upon the priory; but the king had been a benefactor, and fresh charters and greater gifts might come; and there was much to do, for not yet was the church completed. Of Bishop EVERARD'S administration we hear but very little. He added to the endowments of the priory at Norwich, divided the archdeaconry of Suffolk into two, and founded St. Paul's Hospital in Norwich on a somewhat grand scale.

The old question of clerical celibacy was revived, but the old laxity proved too strong for half-hearted reformers. The building of churches seems to have

gone on but slowly, for the taxes lay heavy on the land in King Henry's time, and in the following reign all was anarchy. Then, too, the horrible frenzy against the Jews broke out in every kind of hateful cruelty, and stories are told of atrocities that are shocking to read of. Among those is the story of the Christian boy said to have been crucified by the Jews at Norwich—they called him St. William—which is only one of those curious fabrications which are the natural outcome of the imagination heated in the furnace of religious intolerance.¹

Whether it were the evil fortune, or the rashness and folly of his house that clung to him, we know not, but as three of his brothers had suffered forfeiture of their estates, so Bishop EVERARD, in his old age, suffered the loss of his bishopric. A contemporary writer tells us he was deposed for his exceeding cruelty. No subsequent chronicler repeats the charge, nor is it easy to believe it. Probably, the cause of his being driven from his see was the hostility which he provoked on the part of the monks of the priory, who may easily have aroused suspicion against him and made his position untenable. The true state of the case we shall never know. The date of his removal from Norwich was 1145.² He retired to Fontenay in the Côte d'Or; there he spent his

¹ Trivet [*temp.* Edw. I.] in his "Annals," gives no less than *four* stories of Jews crucifying boys. Florence of Worcester's story of the boy murdered by the Jews at Bury is not included in these.

² This is the date given by Rad. Coggeshall for his *retirement from Norwich to Fontenay*.

last years in carrying on the building of that famous abbey, and there he died.¹

Meanwhile, during the quarter of a century that had passed since Bishop EVERARD's appointment to the bishopric, things had gone on steadily changing from bad to worse. The bishop of Salisbury, after surviving the death of his royal master some four years, was at last worried into his grave by the savage tyrant who succeeded. There was no one now fitted to preside over the exchequer as Bishop Roger had done. Stephen never gave his ministers a chance of managing for him, and his financial position became desperate. Money was harder and harder to get. The king had no friends. It was probably in some time of special difficulty—it may have been in hopes of exacting some large aid, or in part payment of some enforced loan—that the convent at Norwich was permitted to choose a bishop to succeed EVERARD, whom the monks can never have cordially liked, and probably were glad enough to be rid of. However it came to pass, the fact is certain that about the year 1146,² the monks elected to the vacant see their own sub-prior, a man as unlike his predecessor in every respect as could well be imagined. WILLIAM TURBE, for this was his name, had been an inmate of the monastery at

¹ See a curious paper on this bishop in the "Norf. Archæol.," vol. v.

² The exact date of Bishop TURBE's consecration is unknown. Gervase says it was in 1146 (vol. i., p. 130). He assisted at the consecration of Hilary, bishop of Chichester, August 4, 1147 (*ii. s.*, p. 132).

Norwich from boyhood. He had been brought up under Bishop HERBERT's own eye, had drawn in the air of the convent with every breath, and was deeply influenced by the spirit of monasticism which, in the twelfth century, exhibited some of its best and worst characteristics lying very closely side by side.

If, in the struggle that was inevitable between the king (as the impersonation of political power becoming more and more absolute) and the Papacy (as the witness for a spiritual kingdom where right, not might, was to be supreme) it was becoming imperative on all men to engage without shrinking, there could be no doubt which side Bishop TURBE would choose as his own. Bishop EVERARD had been the king's nominee, a secular, a politician, a man of the world; under him all fervour and zeal and discipline had languished. Now, peradventure, a revival of the old order might be looked for. The priory at Norwich had been under eclipse of late, but a monk of Bishop HERBERT's own training was now to be bishop of the see, and the hopes of the regulars throughout the diocese might well revive. It is plain that from the first Bishop TURBE showed himself consistently loyal to the traditions of his early life. All that we hear of him conveys the impression of his being an uncompromising administrator. He is the only bishop of Norwich, during more than a century, of whom we never hear that he crossed the Channel. Unhappily, we know but little of those last nine years of King Stephen's reign—if reign it might be called where all was anarchy.

It came to an end at last on the 25th October, 1154. Three months afterwards, Henry II. was crowned at Westminster: the bishop of Norwich being one of those who took part in the ceremony. Next year Thomas Becket became chancellor, and in May, 1157, the priory of Norwich once more entertained a royal visitor when Henry II. came to receive the submission of Hugh Bigot, the rebellious earl, and the surrender of Norwich Castle, which thereupon was delivered into the hands of the king. In 1160 Henry crossed over to Normandy and remained away for more than six years; the great chancellor meanwhile watching the finances of the country and being to Henry II. what Bishop Roger of Salisbury had been to Henry I.

Hitherto, Becket, though he had been archdeacon of Canterbury for years, had only been in deacon's orders; on the 2nd June, 1162, he was ordained priest at Canterbury, and next day he was consecrated archbishop, Bishop TURBE, of Norwich, assisting at the ceremony. With the resignation of the chancellorship, which followed very shortly upon his appointment to the primacy, the quarrel between Becket and the king began. In the autumn of 1163 the breach had occurred, which continued to widen till the seven years' strife ended in the closing tragedy. The attitude assumed by Becket was the attitude of a prelate, with what in those days were regarded as advanced views on the rights and privileges of the ecclesiastical office. His theory was that the clergy should be tried only in the ecclesiastical courts, and that, in giving over a clerical delinquent to be

sentenced by the laity, he was surrendering the privileges of his order. At the outset Becket stood almost alone. Even the pope gave him but a half support. When, at the Council of Clarendon, in January, 1164, Becket withdrew the small concession he had previously made, Joscelyn, bishop of Salisbury, and WILLIAM, bishop of Norwich, threw themselves at the archbishop's feet and with tears besought him to yield a point. Becket was inflexible, and from that moment it was evident that there could be no neutral ground between the king and the primate.

Bishop WILLIAM, from this time, appears never to have left his diocese. It was not long before he himself was compelled to act with rigour. Hugh Bigot, earl of Norfolk, had been guilty of an act of oppression and robbery against the Augustinian canons of Pentney, a house which had been founded early in the Conqueror's reign by Robert de Vaux, a subtenant of the Bigots. William de Vaux, grandson of the founder, was prior of Pentney, and, under pressure of the lord of the fee, had been induced to surrender some valuable estates to the earl. The canons protested, but in vain, whereupon they appealed to Rome; and in July, 1166, the pope wrote to Becket announcing that he had excommunicated Earl Hugh and William de Vaux. To publish this excommunication, in the then state of affairs, was to fly in the face of the king, exasperated beyond endurance by the determined contumacy of the primate. Nevertheless, the bishop of Norwich did not hesitate for a moment. Entering the cathedral with his pastoral staff in his

hand, he mounted the pulpit and publicly pronounced the papal sentence against the mighty earl, and, having thus discharged what he believed to be his duty, he went to the high altar, and, laying his staff upon it, solemnly defied any man, king or noble, to take it away. If he did not remember, he must often have heard how, in the old days, when William Rufus was making merchandise of the Church of God, the king had snatched from the great Bishop HERBERT his pastoral staff, the symbol of episcopal authority. Let the king that now reigned do the like to another bishop of Norwich—if he dared !

We read that, after taking this bold step, Bishop WILLIAM turned his back upon the episcopal palace—perhaps he left it desolate for awhile—and resumed his residence with the monks in the priory in the south of the church, becoming once more a member of the great religious house, and living as one of the brethren of the order. But not even so was he satisfied. He called a synod of the clergy of his diocese, and then and there openly excommunicated Gilbert, bishop of London, who had become one of the leaders of what we should now call the Low Church party, and when menaces were hurled at him and real danger seemed to be hanging over him, he kept himself within the precincts of the Cathedral Close till the storm blew over. During all this business Henry II. was in Normandy ; in March, 1170, he returned to England after a four years' absence. He was back again in Normandy in June, and in July the reconciliation of Fréteval took place. On the 1st December Becket landed at

Sandwich, John of Oxford, the king's chaplain, being one of his escort ; on the 2nd he entered Canterbury in state, and forthwith sent letters to the bishop of Norwich absolving Earl Hugh. During the next three weeks Becket seems to have kept up an animated correspondence with Bishop WILLIAM, and in a letter of the 9th December he expresses his intention of seeking an interview with the earl and of paying a visit to the bishop at Norwich. The intention was never carried out : on Tuesday, the 29th December, the primate was murdered in Canterbury cathedral, to the horror and consternation of the Christian world.

The one bishop in England who had stood by the dauntless primate during all the long struggle was Bishop WILLIAM of Norwich. It was over now and the martyr's stanch supporter was not likely to suffer harm when the tide of public opinion turned. In point of fact, Becket's triumph was assured by his wicked slaughter in defiance of law, and those who stood by him in his peril shared in the honour which soon was shed upon his name.¹ Bishop WILLIAM survived the catastrophe just three years : he died in January, 1174.² Three years before his death a fire broke out in the monastery ; the mischief wrought was considerable, and the business of repairing the damage must have taxed the bishop's resources severely

¹ Bishop WILLIAM's memorial lines on Becket are to be found in Stubbs's "Gervase," vol. i., p. 232.

² There is some question as to the exact day. Stubbs's "Register," puts it on the 17th ; Eyton on the 20th ; Florence of Worcester, August 16th.

and clouded his last days with anxiety. He can never have been a rich man ; as compared with his great predecessors and the five or six bishops who succeeded him, he was a very poor one. In and for his diocese he lived and died. It was nearly a century before another monk was consecrated bishop of the see. In the meantime religious life in East Anglia throve but ill. In the second year of his episcopate the first nunnery in Norfolk was founded. It was subject to the Benedictine rule, and was placed in a commanding position upon a spur of the high ground of Bracondale, then a suburb of the city of Norwich. Here, as time went on, rose up one of the most useful religious establishments in the diocese. The nuns enjoyed a wide reputation for their success in conducting a ladies' school, and for centuries,—indeed, down to the very day of the suppression of the convent,—they retained the affection and respect of all classes. About the same time as the nunnery at Carrow was founded in Norfolk, another nunnery was set up for Suffolk at Bungay. This latter house, however, never attained to any great importance.

Bishop TURBE died just in time to escape the miseries that came upon Norwich in June, 1174. The old Earl Hugh was once more in rebellion, and to him came a force of Flemish knights sent over by Philip, Count of Flanders, who landed on the Suffolk coast and marched straight to Norwich. They set fire to the city and plundered the wretched inhabitants freely, carried off a large number of the principal citizens and demanded immense ransoms. On the news of the approach of the king, Earl Hugh led his

Flemings to his castle of Framlingham and there made the best terms he could. He was required to surrender his castles, but the remnants of the foreign marauders were allowed to return as they came. Of the plundered citizens we hear not another word.

Henry II. did penance at the shrine of Becket in July, hurried back to Normandy to receive the submission of his rebellious sons, and in October Becket's successor in the primacy consecrated no less than four bishops to sees that had been vacant for terms varying from three to seven years. Of the eleven English bishops who had assisted at Becket's enthronement on the 3rd June, 1162, six had died ; of the rest only one—Bartholomew of Exeter—had had the courage to stand forth as the martyr's friend and advocate. The king was slow to fill up the vacant bishoprics ; there was no saying what the attitude of a prelate might be, when once he was in possession of his temporalities. So, too, it was with the great religious houses. The monks were saturated with papal sentiment. To weaken their hands was only common prudence on the part of the sovereign. Hence, no less than twelve of the great monasteries were kept without their abbots, the king refusing to nominate ; and possibly the delay in appointing to the bishopric of Norwich arose from the close connexion between the last bishop and the priory. Be that as it may, the Norwich monks were not called upon to elect a successor to Bishop TURBE till June, 1175. This time they knew their interest too well to think of electing one of their own body, and they presented to the king as the object of their choice

almost the very last man in England whom Bishop TURBE would have wished to succeed him.

JOHN OF OXFORD, the nominee for the vacant bishopric, was a scholar of conspicuous ability who had early attracted to himself the notice of the king. Of his parentage we know nothing, nor of the circumstances under which he first gained the royal favour. He was still a young man when, in February, 1164, he was entrusted with a difficult and delicate mission to the pope for obtaining his Holiness's confirmation of the Constitutions of Clarendon; and when in the autumn of the same year Becket, finding his position in England no longer safe, fled across the Channel, JOHN OF OXFORD was again commissioned to the court of the king of France, with the object of prejudicing Louis against his distinguished guest. Failing in this, he made his way to the pope, if possible, to thwart, by his diplomacy, Becket's plans. Next year we find him engaged in an embassy to Frederick Barbarossa, and present at the Council of Wurzburg on the 23rd May. Later in the summer he was again at the king's side, occupying a position something like Controller of the Royal Household. He is described as *Clericus* with several *clerici* under him, but it is doubtful whether he was at this time in any but minor orders. As yet he had received no great reward for his diplomatic services; but when, at the close of the year, the deanery of Salisbury fell vacant by the promotion of Henry de Beaumont to the bishopric of Baieux, JOHN OF OXFORD received his first preferment, and was duly installed in the deanery by Joscelyn, bishop

of Salisbury. From the pulpit at Vézelay, on Whitsunday, 1166, Becket, glad to find occasion against an old antagonist, hurled a sentence of excommunication against the new dean for *usurping*¹ the deanery, and another sentence of suspension against the bishop of Salisbury for instituting him. It was a *brutum fulmen*. Five months after this, JOHN OF OXFORD was despatched to Rome, whither Pope Alexander had at last returned.

During the next nine years we can trace him either in constant attendance upon the king or employed in foreign embassies, and when, in 1170, Becket returned from his exile, it was JOHN OF OXFORD who was deputed to escort the primate, and who saved him from the personal insults which his enemies were preparing to inflict. All through those months which elapsed between the death of Bishop TURBE and his own election, JOHN OF OXFORD seems hardly to have left the king's side. He was in attendance upon the court at Winchester a fortnight before his own consecration, which took place at Lambeth on the 15th December, 1175. His promotion to the bishopric produced no change in his way of life; to the end of Henry's reign, and even after that, he is conspicuous as a diplomatist, courtier, and politician, and when in 1179, after the resignation of Richard de Lucy, who had been Chief Justiciar for twenty-five years, the king commenced his great reforms in the administration

¹ It seems that previous to his appointment one Arso had been put into the deanery and had been ejected.—Jones, "Fasti Eccles. Sarisbu."

of justice, the bishop of Norwich was one of those appointed Itinerant Justices to co-operate with Ranulf de Glanville, the great lawyer of his time. Henceforth, till the accession of Richard I., he appears to have been absorbed in his judicial duties, though still occasionally employed as ambassador or wherever his talents as a diplomatist were required. When the fall of Jerusalem before the arms of Saladin horrified the Christian world, and a new outburst of fanaticism urged people to set out to recover the holy sepulchre from the infidel, JOHN OF OXFORD was too wary a courtier not to do as other men did. He took the cross, *i. e.*, he vowed to go to the Holy Land and join in the Crusade. He appears to have given in his name in February, 1188; but he did not hurry himself to start upon his voyage. Henry II. died in July, having appointed him one of his executors, and he was present at the coronation of Richard I. in September. During the three months that elapsed between his coronation and his departure for the Crusade, King Richard employed JOHN OF OXFORD to mediate between the monks of Canterbury and the Archbishop in that weary quarrel which seemed as if it would never end. As might have been expected, the bishop's award was in the primate's favour, and of course the dispute went on as before. In the summer of 1190 he started in company with Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury, Bishop Hubert of Salisbury, and Ranulf Glanville, the deposed Chief Justiciar. These three pushed on to Acre, where two of them perished miserably in the siege; the bishop of Norwich turned aside

to visit the pope at Rome, and there obtained absolution from his crusading vow. With empty purse, says the Chronicle, he returned to England, and peradventure retired to his diocese. King Richard, when he heard of his turning back, was angered at the bad example set, and took occasion to wring from him a heavy fine. Richard himself arrived at Acre on the 8th June, 1191; on the 12th July the town surrendered; on the 11th October the king set out on his disastrous homeward voyage. As soon as Richard's imprisonment became known in England, the bishop of Norwich showed extraordinary energy in raising money for his ransom, but it was not till the 13th March, 1194, that the king again set foot on English soil. As for Bishop JOHN, his political career was at an end; he is said, at last to have done something for his diocese; to have finished the cathedral, to have restored the ravages of the fire in Bishop TURBE's time, to have erected the infirmary of the monastery, and to have rebuilt the Church of the Holy Trinity at Ipswich. Almost the last thing we hear of him is, that he was once more called upon to support Hubert, Archbishop Baldwin's successor in the primacy, against the Canterbury monks. This was in June, 1198. In the following April King Richard died, and on the 27th of May the bishop of Norwich performed the last public act recorded of him—he took part in the coronation of King John at Westminster. In June next year he died, and was buried in his own cathedral. No monument seems ever to have marked the place of his burial, nor did any conspicuous record

of his episcopate survive him. A sagacious and accomplished man of the world—a scholar of mark, fond of books and of learned men, astute, clear-headed, ambitious,—he had none of the devout sentiment of the pietist; he was the first of the lawyer and politician bishops who ruled over the East Anglian see.

The episcopate of JOHN OF OXFORD is chiefly memorable as covering that period of conflict between the monasteries and the bishops which, besides other disastrous effects that it brought about, was the cause of an almost absolute collapse of ecclesiastical order and discipline. The mischievous appeals to Rome prosecuted on every frivolous pretext were the means of putting a bishop to expense wholly disproportionate to that incurred by the appellant, who in most cases had little to lose and everything to gain. It was idle to legislate where the law had no force, and idle to contend for a principle in a court where the longest purse carried the verdict with it as a matter of course. Thus the hands of the bishops were tied, and their interest in their several dioceses could not but get less and less.

If JOHN OF OXFORD was rarely resident, his successor was even less so. This was JOHN DE GREY—often called JOHN THE SECOND—a scion of that wonderful stock from which, for six centuries, there has sprung an almost uninterrupted succession of representative men in Church and State, and which down to the present hour shows no sign of decadence. He was a Norfolk man by birth, and early gained the favour of King John. He filled some office in

the chancery and, as was usual, soon obtained preferment. When JOHN OF OXFORD died he was archdeacon of Gloucester; but immediately on the vacancy at Norwich being known, he was appointed to the see, and consecrated bishop on the 24th September, 1200. The ceremony took place in St. Catherine's Chapel, Westminster, and was the occasion of a fresh outbreak of jealousy and rancour on the part of the Canterbury monks, who loudly asserted that the archbishop had no right to consecrate except in the cathedral church at Canterbury,—to such a pitch had the arrogance of the great monasteries grown. The quarrel never went far, and Bishop GREY was so little involved in it, that when the archbishop died, in July, 1205, a large section of the Canterbury monks were prevailed upon to elect him to the vacancy¹; “and this,” says Matthew Paris, “was the origin of all the discord that came to pass, the which for generations wrought harm to England and mischief irremediable”; but on this matter it is not within my province to dwell.

Another candidate for the primacy was put forward by another faction among the Canterbury monks. Instead of approving either, the pope appointed Stephen Langton to the archbishopric. JOHN DE GREY's election was quashed on the ground of informality. There were doubtless other good reasons, and the probability is, that the bishop of Norwich

¹ King John was apparently staying with Bishop GREY at his new palace at Gaywood, near Lynn, in October, 1205, *i.e.*, just at the time when the question of the succession to the primacy was pending.

was looked upon as too much a friend of the king of England to be regarded with favour by the astute diplomatists at Rome. Hubert Walter, the late archbishop, had shown that he had a policy of his own, which his younger colleague in the chancery might carry out with more vigour and more success, and there may have been closer relations between the two ecclesiastics which, unknown to us, were perfectly well known at Rome. Both were enormously rich, both were Norfolk men, and both conspicuous for their life-long fidelity to their royal masters. So JOHN DE GREY remained bishop of Norwich to the end, though in another contest at the close of his career his nephew, Walter de Grey, succeeded in being elected archbishop of York, notwithstanding all the efforts of Simon Langton, the primate's brother, to secure for himself the northern province.¹

As for the see of Norwich under its new bishop, it was left to itself, administered, it is to be supposed, by suffragans and officials. The bishop himself was everywhere except at home ; sometimes he was commanding an army against the French, sometimes sitting as justiciar at Westminster or elsewhere ; for years he was away in Ireland, where he filled the important office of lord-deputy, and where, perhaps to his own advantage, he was not only removed from the duties of his diocese, but from the political struggles that were going on so fiercely on our side of the Channel. He returned from Ireland only to witness the shameful humiliation of King John, and the

¹ Bishop GREY survived his nephew's consecration to York just thirteen days.

resignation of the crown, and the doing homage for it as a fief of the pope. He died, October 18, 1214, as he was returning from an embassy to Rome, whither he had gone to arrange the terms on which the interdict upon the kingdom should be removed. His body was brought home and buried in his cathedral, where in life he had been almost a stranger. During all the term of his episcopate, the man in East Anglia who, above all others, was the witness for earnestness and living faith and uncompromising uprightness, was—not the bishop of Norwich, but Sampson, abbot of Bury St. Edmunds; not that either the one or the other can be credited with any high ideal—the age was coarse, and violent, and cruel—but the bishop was a mere man of the world; the monk, in his rough way and according to his light, was certainly better than his age, and clearly a seeker after God. Neither lived to take part in the great conflict which ended in the signing of Magna Charta. When the crisis came there was no bishop of Norwich to take either side.

It was just a year after Bishop GREY's death that the French fleet landed the army of invasion on the coast of Suffolk; two years and a day after, King John followed him to the grave. In the following January Louis, the French king, took Norwich and sacked it; eight months afterwards his cause had collapsed and he was gone. For seven long years the see of Norwich remained vacant. PANDULPH MASCA, the pope's legate, though declared bishop as early as 1215, was not consecrated—nor, indeed, ordained to the priesthood—till May, 1222; both

ceremonies were performed at Rome, and it is doubtful whether the Italian intruder ever set foot in the diocese from which, we may be sure, he did not fail to draw the revenues. Of him and of his successor THOMAS DE BLUMVILLE¹ it is difficult to write without impatience. PANDULPH was a mere Ultramontane adventurer, to whom preferment brought only opportunities for plunder. Bishop THOMAS was an adventurer too. Both were civilians, who resorted to holy orders when it suited their purpose to take upon them the ecclesiastical function, and BLUMVILLE was quite content to be a cypher in East Anglia as far as any episcopal duties were concerned. He was consecrated at Canterbury on the 20th of December, 1226, by Stephen Langton. Seven years after this he was called upon by the pope to make a visitation of his diocese—a shameful mandate, and one which draws our attention to the only incident in this bishop's life that has been recorded. Nevertheless, Bishop BLUMVILLE's episcopate marks an era in the religious history of East Anglia, of which far too little has hitherto been made; for it was early in his time that the *Friars* settled in Lynn and Norwich.

¹ He was a clerk in the Exchequer. Matth. Paris, iii. 121.

CHAPTER VI.

KING HENRY'S BISHOPS.

It is impossible to understand the history of the thirteenth century in England without having some notion of the immense power acquired by the pope over English affairs when King John formally resigned his crown and kingdom into the hands of Innocent III., on the 15th of May, 1213. By that act England became a fief of the papacy, and from that moment the pope became the over-lord and protector of the king against any who should assail him, including Louis, king of France, and the malcontent English barons, with Archbishop Langton at their head. The pope's interference saved John his throne. Two years afterwards (5th of June, 1215) the Great Charter was signed. In August the papal legate pronounced the suspension of the archbishop,—a sentence which, in the following November, Pope Innocent confirmed. Within a year from this time both king and pope were dead.

When Henry III. succeeded to his father's crown he was a boy of ten years old. During all his long reign, however inconsistent he might show himself in other matters, he never wavered in his allegiance to the Roman see. More than once he acknowledged that the pope had been his preserver to whom he owed his crown; and in the conflicts of his reign the

king and the pope were almost invariably on one side, the baronage and the English people on the other. Whatever the pope asked the king was prepared to grant, and any resistance that was offered to the outrageous demands of the papal court proceeded from the baronage and the bishops, not from the Crown. Meanwhile, the parochial clergy gradually became cowed and subservient to the papacy; even the bishops found resistance vain. Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln stood almost alone, dauntless and uncompromising; but for the rest the aggressive tactics of Rome proved far too strong, and her power went on increasing till its pressure became a crushing burden which men despaired of ever casting off. In 1225 the nuncio Otho failed in obtaining assent to the extravagant claim that two prebends in every chapter in England should be reserved for the pope's nominees; yet even this exorbitant demand was rather set aside than rejected, and thirty years after Archbishop Langton's death, and when Grosseteste too had been laid in his tomb, there was no Church in Christendom so absolutely subject to papal direction, dictation, and control, as the Church of England. At least eight candidates duly elected to the see of Canterbury were set aside by the pope in the thirteenth century. The country swarmed with foreign ecclesiastics who never came near their cures; the custom of letting out to farm not only the glebe lands, but the actual surplice fees of absentees, rose to such a height that, when a remedy was at last imperatively called for, it was found necessary to proceed with some caution; even the rights of private patronage

were threatened, and an organisation somewhat like that of the Land League in Ireland began to spread alarmingly, till the pope declared that over the rights of the *laity* he claimed no control. Upon the clergy the heavy hand of the papacy never relaxed its grasp. We are told that in 1252 the revenue which the pope derived from England was three times as great as that of the king. Where a bishopric could not be secured for a papal nominee, measures were taken to obtain for him the appointment of archdeacon, and in this way Ottobon de Fiesco, afterwards Pope Adrian V., became archdeacon of Canterbury; and John de Ferentino, the pope's chamberlain, was made archdeacon of Norwich.¹ With such a personage for his second in command, the bishop of the diocese was reduced to a cypher, and we hear no more of Bishop THOMAS DE BLUMVILLE than that he died in August, 1236.

The monks forthwith elected their prior, SIMON OF ELMHAM, a man of saintly life and eminent for his learning. Just at this time Henry III. found his position desperate; his principal adviser, occupying a position analogous to that of Chancellor of the Exchequer, was WILLIAM DE RALEGH; he had been for some time one of the justices itinerant, and had proved himself an able minister and profound lawyer. RALEGH had made great efforts to extricate the king from his embarrassments, but in vain. Simon de Montfort was steadily rising into influence as a leader of the national party, while Grosseteste was the ac-

¹ He narrowly escaped with his life from the violence of a mob infuriated against the foreigners in 1232.—Matt. Paris.

knowledge chief of the ecclesiastical malcontents. The two worked together, but on different lines. The king secretly sent over for Otho, the nuncio who had been recalled from England ten years before. This time he came as papal legate, armed with full powers, and he proceeded to hold the memorable council in St. Paul's on the 19th of November, 1237. At the council he behaved with great dignity, and the canons proposed and agreed to, at this assembly, exhibit a real desire to cope with the evils of the time which had become chronic. The constitutions of Otho and his successor, Ottobon de Fiesco, continued in force for centuries, and were regarded as the statute law of the Church of England down to the time of the Reformation; if the legate were to be judged by them alone, he would deserve to be looked upon as one of the great reformers of his age, but the ineradicable vice of avarice, the insatiable greed of the Italian ecclesiastic, spoilt all. England was, to the foreigner of the thirteenth century, what India was to the Englishman of the eighteenth, a land to plunder,—possibly a land to govern wisely, but certainly to plunder,—and the legate's five years in England ended in his being regarded as a mere robber who had pillaged the clergy without limit, without scruple, and without pity.

Meanwhile the election to Norwich had not been confirmed, the king withholding his consent. What became of the temporalities we are not told. John de Ferentino probably administered the affairs of the diocese in his own way, by the help of some suffragan bishop from the other side of the channel to carry on

the necessary ordinations. The see of Winchester fell vacant; Henry III. desired to secure it for a creature of his own; the monks would not have him and chose WILLIAM DE RALEGH. The king violently protested; for by this time RALEGH had fallen out of favour, having apparently come under the influence of Grosseteste. The result was that the see of Winchester too was kept vacant, and continued so for years.

It was early in the spring of 1239 when the pope's award in the matter of Norwich was finally pronounced, and the election of SIMON OF ELMHAM quashed. A little before this (28th of December, 1238), Alexander, bishop of Lichfield, had died, and again the question arose as to who was to succeed him. Here were three bishoprics vacant, the candidates approved by the monks in two instances having been objected to by the king, the pope supporting him in his protest. On the 23rd of February the canons of Lichfield proceeded to elect a bishop, and their choice fell upon WILLIAM DE RALEGH. On the 10th of April the monks of Norwich were permitted to choose a bishop to supersede their prior, whose election was void: they, too, chose WILLIAM DE RALEGH. The elect to three bishoprics had to declare which he preferred. The king would not have him at Winchester; between the other two he did not hesitate long. He accepted the call from Norwich, and to that see he was consecrated, after a delay of some months, by Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, on the 25th of September, 1239. If any explanation is required for the active opposition which Bishop RALEGH

encountered at the king's hands, and the remarkable unanimity with which he was elected to three vacancies at once, it must be sought in the fact that about the time of the legate Otho's arrival in England, RALEGH had gone over to the national party, and that he was on friendly terms with Bishop Grosseteste and well disposed towards the friars. He had not long been bishop of Norwich when he received an order to make a return of the number of Italians beneficed in his diocese. Unhappily, the return, if any was made, has perished. Of the way in which he administered his diocese no records remain. He had occupied the see barely two years when he was a second time elected bishop of Winchester; again the king opposed his election, but this time unavailingly, and he was enthroned on the 20th of November, 1244, Winchester having been left without a bishop for just six years.¹

Bishop RALEGH's successor at Norwich was WALTER DE SUFFIELD, or WALTER CALTHORP (for he is called indifferently by either surname), a man of unblemished character, a graduate of the University of Paris,² a scion of an old Norfolk house whose ancestors had enjoyed large possessions in East Anglia, and a friend of Bishop Grosseteste and of the Franciscans. Elected by the monks shortly after the choice of the Winchester convent had fallen upon

¹ On the whole business, see Luard's "Grosseteste," *Introd.*, p. lix.

² And probably also of Oxford, as Blomfield suggests. Richard de Wick, bishop of Chichester, was also a graduate of both universities.

his predecessor, he received the royal assent on the 9th of July, 1244, and was consecrated in the church of the nunnery at Carrow on the 19th of February following. His episcopate is memorable for the assessment which was made under his direction of all the ecclesiastical property in England, for the purpose of adjusting the taxation levied by the pope. The NORWICH TAXATION, as it was called, continued in force as the accepted rating-book for the clergy and religious houses until a new assessment was made under the orders of Pope Nicholas IV., which came into operation in 1291. Bishop CALTHORP's will has come down to us, and shows him to have been a man of vast possessions and of large-hearted munificence. The substance of it may be read in Blomfield's "History of Norfolk," and it is well worth perusal. To one friend he leaves his "little Bible"; to another his Psalter; to a third "a great Bible"; and to the hospital of St. Giles, which he had founded at Norwich, "the Bible I bought of Master Simon Blound, and the cup out of which the poor children drank." He left, too, a large and valuable library behind him, the bulk of which he bequeathed to his nephew, Walter de Calthorp. He remembered the monastery at Norwich, and was liberal to the friars, both Dominican and Franciscan; and he ordered that he should be buried in the new Lady Chapel which he had thrown out at the east end of the cathedral, having, it is asserted, demolished the old Lady Chapel of HERBERT LOSINGA with a view to building a larger and more sumptuous appendage to the mother-church. The foundations of Bishop CAL-

THORP'S chapel show it to have been constructed in far too light and flimsy a way to stand the wear of centuries, and in little more than 300 years Time the avenger saw it crumble to decay. Before the high altar of this chapel they laid the bishop, as his will directed ; and shortly after his burial, reverence for his memory, wonder at his sanctity, or gratitude for his munificence, led to the belief that miracles were wrought at his tomb. He is the only bishop of Norwich whose saintly life has been his chief characteristic, and the traditions of whose holiness and unworldly self-denial survived when almost everything else that concerned him had been forgotten. Bishop CALTHORP is a good specimen of a mediæval prelate, keeping up a princely state and lavish hospitality in his diocese, holding aloof from the war of politics, and if not strong enough to change the face of his times or to act as a leader in carrying out much-needed reforms, yet doing the best he could under the circumstances in which he found himself, and showing by his example that in the worst times a man of faith and prayer may live near to God. He died at Colchester on the 20th of May, 1257. Before the end of the month his successor was chosen and the election approved by the king.

The new bishop was another Norfolk man, SIMON DE WATTON, which for the most part men spelt as the word is pronounced in Norfolk, Wauton. He was another of the lawyer-bishops ; he had been for some years an industrious functionary in the Exchequer and if he was even in holy orders at all he had as yet received no preferment. On the occurrence of the

vacancy at Norwich, we are told he showed some unseemly haste and greediness; and aftertimes remembered or repeated that he had been a conspicuous example of the sin that his name recalled, and that, too, in a Simoniacal age. Nevertheless, he secured the bishopric, and was enthroned in the cathedral on the 17th March, 1258.

Not much was to be expected from a prelate whose antecedents were wholly secular; and accordingly we know little or nothing of the way in which the diocese fared under his rule. The first year of his episcopate was disastrous for East Anglia, and by reason of the floods in summer and the continued rain in harvest, a grievous famine ensued, "so that men ate horseflesh and the bark of trees, yea, even worse, and many died of hunger." In the council held at Lambeth on the 8th of May, 1261, Bishop SIMON took part; the king, Prince Edward, and Queen Eleanor protesting against the proceedings, but in vain. Next year we find the bishop on the side *against* the baronage, and publishing the papal absolution from the oath which Henry III., in 1258, had sworn to carry out the reforms then agreed on. It was a step which provoked immense indignation. Civil war broke out, and the popular party was furious against every one who favoured the pope and his foreigners. Peter of Savoy, the detested bishop of Hereford, fell into the hands of the barons, and was actually thrown into prison. The bishop of Norwich was compelled to take sanctuary in the abbey of St. Edmund: there only could he be safe. During all this time the

great East Anglian abbey had been growing in influence and power; and now using their opportunity, the monks, who—much to their annoyance—had for a while been compelled to submit to the establishment of a house of Franciscan friars outside the convent walls, contrived to rid themselves with a high hand of their too zealous neighbours. Three years after this the bishop died, on the 2nd of January, 1266. He was buried in Bishop CALTHORP'S Lady Chapel. If he lived in evil times, Bishop SIMON did little to mend them,—a man of whom History has no good to tell.

Once more King Henry had to assent to the election of a bishop of Norwich. The kingdom was in a pitiful state; the battle of Evesham, on the 4th of August, 1265, had, to all appearance, utterly crushed the hopes of the popular party, left it without a leader, and scattered to all the winds the forces that Simon de Montfort had brought into union. He and his followers were “disinherited” of all their possessions; but desperate men are wont to be troublesome, and up and down the land there was much lawlessness, robbery, and pillage. Some of the *disinherited* took refuge in the abbey of Bury St. Edmunds, and there they assumed a menacing attitude. It was no time for keeping bishoprics vacant and making more enemies, so the monks of Norwich were, without delay, permitted to proceed to an election, and on the 23rd of January, 1266,—just three weeks after the death of SIMON DE WATTON,—they chose as his successor their own prior, ROGER DE SKERNING.

A Norfolk man, like his predecessor, and born, as

his name implies, at a village adjoining the town of East Dereham, he had been a monk of Norwich for many years, and prior of the monastery since 1257. The early years of his episcopate were full of trouble. For more than a twelvemonth the party of the disinherited continued to hold out in East Anglia; from the fastnesses in Marshland they defied the king's forces, levying black-mail mercilessly on the wretched inhabitants. Bury St. Edmunds was one of their places of refuge; thence they came out, in the spring of 1266, and made an attempt to capture Lynn, after pillaging the district round; the townsmen beat them back, but they got clear off with their booty. In May the Royalists took Bury, and fined the abbey a hundred pounds and the townsmen two hundred marks for their support of the insurgents. In August, however, fortune favoured the rebels once more, and they captured Ely; issuing thence in great force they assailed Norwich, and sacked it on the 19th of December, carrying away immense plunder. It was not till July, 1267, that Prince Edward was strong enough to recover Ely, and with this success the civil war was at an end. No part of England had suffered more than the diocese of Norwich during the latter stages of the strife, or had greater reason to rejoice when peace came at last.

Meanwhile,—in October, 1265,—the papal legate, Ottobon, arrived from Rome in the hope of mediating between the belligerents. A council was held in London, at which the canons promulgated by Otho in the previous assembly were confirmed, together

with some additional ones. They give us a deplorable picture of the condition of religion in England at the time. Churches had been pulled down on pretence of repairing them, others had been left unconsecrated for years; benefices had been despoiled of their incomes to enrich the monasteries, and left without any provision for the working clergy, who were driven to become pluralists or to live on fees improperly demanded; parishes were left in sole charge of deacons or even acolytes, who resigned their people for absolution and even the sacrament of the altar to the friars; grave laxity in admitting to holy orders prevailed, and candidates in many cases were subject to little or no scrutiny or examination. These were evils that were patent, and the council attempted to deal with them, and did provide wholesome remedies. But the re-enactment of the canons of Otho so soon after they were promulgated goes far to prove that the previous legislation had been useless. Laws need an executive at once powerful and just, and discipline in Church or State depends less on the excellence of the law than on the character of those whose duty it is to carry out the law. One thing is significant: Bishop ROGER found the benefice of his own birth-place divided into two portions, though there was no second church; the rector of one portion did all the work, the rector of the other portion employed a vicar for doing the absolutely necessary duties which he was bound to discharge, and paid that vicar the sum of six marks annually for his services. The same arrangement has continued to the present day, the

rector of the one mediety being the single parson of the parish, but receiving, in recognition of his office as vicar under the lay rector of the second mediety, the same yearly payment of six marks as his predecessors did six hundred years ago.

Bishop ROGER's episcopate was disgraced by a very serious conflict in the year 1272 between the citizens of Norwich and the monks of the priory, for which there remains little room for doubting that the priory was almost wholly to blame. There had been a soreness and jealousy between the city and the monastery of some years' standing, which at last burst forth into a violent fray in June, 1272, when one of the prior's party slew one of the citizens. The bishop was absent at the time, but he no sooner heard of the affair than he excommunicated the citizens, and laid the city under an interdict, thereby showing the natural bias of a monk siding with his own convent. Encouraged by the bishop's support, the prior hastened to introduce a force of armed ruffians into the cathedral close, and the citizens retaliated, goaded to frenzy by the outrageous provocation they had received. On the 9th of August the citizens attacked the belfry tower of the monastery, which stood close to the present Ethelbert gate, and from its proximity to the city liberties afforded a post of vantage from which the monks could harass and annoy the townsmen. Favoured by an accidental fire which broke out at the time, the townsmen got possession of the tower, slew thirteen of the defenders, and did serious damage to the monastic buildings. The cathedral itself appears to have escaped injury,

but the church of St. Ethelbert, and, unhappily, the convent archives, with much else that was within reach of the flames, were destroyed. The catastrophe created a great sensation. The king came down to Norwich to institute a solemn inquiry, and the pope issued a bull upon the subject. At least thirty poor creatures were hanged and their bodies burned, and 173 of the rioters, whose names have come down to us, were visited with various punishments, and their goods confiscated as a matter of course. But modern research has brought to light certain painful revelations which historic truth may not withhold. The prior was proved to have slain a man (John Casmus) at the gates of the priory on the 16th of August with his own hands, and for his part in the outbreak he was virtually deposed. Neither does the bishop come well out of the affair. Though appealed to by many people of influence to show mercy to the citizens, he sternly used his power to the utmost, and proceeded with passionate haste in taking vengeance upon the accused. In the whole business there is only one incident that relieves the general gloom. When the struggle was in its early stage, and before the prior had gone so far as to introduce his mercenaries into the close, the citizens made overtures of peace to the convent and proposed arbitration. The men chosen for peacemakers were certain friars whom one chronicler calls friars-preachers, but who may have been either Franciscans or Dominicans. Of *their* sincerity, impartiality, and holiness of life it was assumed there could be no question, and though the negotiations failed, it was

evidently no fault of the friars, who did their best to pour oil on the troubled waters.

Scarcely two months after he had been at Norwich Henry III. died at St. Edmund's Abbey. During his long reign no fewer than seven bishops had been appointed to this see. If they were not the best, neither were they the worst prelates of their time. Bishop ROGER survived his royal master five years, and died at Elmham on the 22nd of January, 1278. The power of the pope in England had reached its culminating point before King Henry's death; with the accession of the great Edward the re-action against papal usurpation began.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIOCESE UNDER THE EDWARDS.

WHEN Henry III. died, in November, 1272, Prince Edward, the heir to the throne, had been absent two years from England, engaged in the hopeless attempt to wrest the Holy Land from the Saracens. Three months before the prince's departure, the primate, Boniface of Savoy, had died abroad, but, as the Papacy had been vacant for nearly two years, the see of Canterbury could not be filled up till the cardinals should fix upon a successor to the chair of St. Peter. They made up their differences at last, and elected Theobald of Placentia, who assumed the tiara on the 1st of January, 1272, under the name of Gregory X. The new pope had spent some time in England in the retinue of the legate Ottobon, but at the time of his election he was attached to the staff, or household, of Prince Edward. After the usual disputes as to the choice of a successor to the archbishopric, the pope settled it in the usual way, by consecrating,—just six weeks before the death of Henry III.,—his own nominee. This was Robert Kilwarby, an Englishman and a Dominican friar, a man of high reputation for learning, piety, and earnestness. Such a man was not likely to be content with the state of affairs which his predecessor had left

behind him; and, indeed, he appears to have had a desire to play the part of a reformer.

Crippled and thwarted as the archbishops of Canterbury were by the jealous antagonism of the monks of Christ Church and St. Augustine, to reform abuses was a very serious undertaking. If the archbishop was ever to effect anything, he must be ably and loyally supported by his archdeacon, on whom very much of the routine administration of the diocese necessarily fell. Unhappily, the archdeaconry of Canterbury had been held for twenty years by an Italian, and, as a consequence, grave abuses had grown up and much injustice had been complained of. So, too, the Court of Arches,—the highest ecclesiastical court in England,—had fallen into much disrepute. Men said it was a place of extortion, where the procedure was cumbrous and costly, and causes were delayed vexatiously, or decided not upon their merits. The Court of Arches sorely needed reform. The new primate had a friend whom he trusted, one WILLIAM DE MIDDLETON, who had studied law at Paris and Oxford, and had become celebrated as a preacher in an age when preachers were not rare. Not many months after the archbishop's consecration we find William de Middleton appointed Dean of the Arches, and already attempting a change in the procedure of the court;¹ three years after this he became Archdeacon of Canterbury,² a vacancy having at last

¹ Collier, ii., 574. It was not, however, till thirteen years after this that the real reform of the court was carried out by Archbishop Winchelsey.—Wilkins, ii., 205.

² Gervase, ii., 282.

occurred in what was then a very important and influential office. He had held the archdeaconry just two years¹ when the see of Norwich fell vacant, and, the licence having been speedily obtained from the king, he was elected to the bishopric on the 24th February, and consecrated by his friend the primate on the 29th May, 1278. It was almost the last public act of the archbishop in England. Shortly afterwards he was summoned to Rome, was made a cardinal, and resigned the archbishopric into other hands. As to the new bishop of Norwich, he derived his name from the village of Middleton, near Lynn, in Norfolk, where his forefathers had held land for some generations. The family had been rising in importance of late, and had acquired property in Wichingham, Rougham, and elsewhere in their native county. Four at least of the bishop's brothers benefited more or less by his advancement, and there is no reason to believe that they were unworthy of the preferment they received. THOMAS became archdeacon of Suffolk; ELIAS was made seneschal, or steward, of the bishop's town of Lynn; RALPH was promoted to the living of Burston, in the bishop's gift; and WALTER was standing counsel for St. Edmund's Abbey, and became the founder of a family who long retained their estates in the county of Norfolk.²

The six years which had elapsed since the great fray between the citizens of Norwich and the monks

¹ He was succeeded in the archdeaconry by another Norfolk man, Robert of Yarmouth.

² Among the muniments at Rougham Hall the names of all four brothers occur, executing and attesting charters.

of the priory had been spent in laying out large sums upon the monastic buildings and on Bishop HERBERT'S vast church, which, after two hundred years, needed repair, or, it is said, even completion. The time had come for reopening the cathedral, after the restoration, with an imposing ceremony; accordingly, on Advent Sunday, 1278 (27th November), a magnificent religious pageantry was arranged, and the new bishop was enthroned. The king and queen were present, and the bishops of London, Hereford, and Waterford,¹ with a large number of the nobility, took part in the proceedings, and helped to increase the splendour of the occasion. This business over, the bishop next proceeded to hold a visitation of his diocese. We read that this was carried out with unusual strictness; not only the secular, or parochial clergy, but the monasteries too were compelled to submit to inquiry, their privileges and immunities notwithstanding. Archbishop Kilwarby had been succeeded by a man of far more vigour and force of character in John Peckham, a Franciscan friar, who had lost no time in endeavouring to effect some trenchant reforms in the Church of England;² and Bishop MIDDLETON'S visitation must be taken as an indication of his willingness to co-operate¹ zealously with the primate. It was during this same year, 1279, that the famous statute of Mortmain was passed,—a statute the object of which was to prevent the further acquisition of

¹ Stephen Fulburn. He was Treasurer of Ireland in 1274, and subsequently Lord Chief Justice. In 1286 he became Archbishop of Tuam.

² Stubbs, "Const. Hist.," ii., 112.

landed property by religious or other corporations,¹ and which was acquiesced in by the nation at large, the more readily because of the immense influence already acquired by the mendicant orders who were opposed to religious endowments.

Next year Archbishop Peckham himself made a visitation of the monasteries in the diocese of Norwich. He spent more than two months in this visitation, which was extraordinarily rigorous and searching;² the result leaves a very favourable impression upon us of the condition of the religious houses in Norfolk at the time. King Edward I. paid three visits to Norfolk in Bishop Middleton's days; it is not improbable that his presence in the county during the years 1281 and 1284 may have been occasioned by the frightful floods and consequent distress which fell upon the people during these years, and of which it is pleasant to find evidence in the rolls of the priory at Norwich, recording large distributions of corn to the poor at the time of the distress. But the most disastrous catastrophe, and far surpassing the two previous ones in the extent of the misery it occasioned, was the great flood of the year 1287, when hundreds were drowned by an incursion of the sea, which extended from the Wash to the Irwell, and laid whole villages under water,—the calamity being most fatal in the districts of Marshland and the broads. It was while the county was still suffering from this terrible visitation that the great church at Yarmouth was consecrated, an event of sufficient public impor-

¹ "Select Charters," 448.

² See note (C).

tance to deserve mention in the chronicles of the time.

Bishop MIDDLETON held the see of Norwich for just ten years, and died at his manor of Terling, in Essex, on the 31st August, 1288. He had but lately returned from Gascony, where he had been steward of the Royal Household, having been compelled to accompany the king when he left England, in May, 1286. In his later years he was closely attached to the court, and thereby effectually prevented from being as active a bishop as, on his first appointment, he seemed likely to become. Possibly the king knew his man, and kept him at his own side. For the rest it is significant that we now first find in the Norwich Priory Rolls entries of payments to the poor scholars at Oxford, whom the convent now begins to support during their studies. The intellectual activity of the time had extended to East Anglia.

Bishop MIDDLETON was buried in the Lady Chapel on Sunday, the 12th September,¹ and that same day two of the Norwich monks set off to obtain from the king—then in Aragon—the necessary licence to proceed to the election of a successor. By the 6th of November they were back again, and on the following Thursday, the 11th, they had unanimously chosen RALPH DE WALPOLE bishop of the see.

The new bishop was the son of John Walpole of Houghton, in the county of Norfolk,² where his family

¹ Cotton's expression is, " . . . in capella domini Norwycensis Episcopi." His three predecessors were certainly buried in the Lady Chapel.

² "Norf. Antiq. Miscell.," vol. i., p. 274.

possessed a capital mansion, and where he himself held land. The Walpoles had been among the most powerful people in East Anglia for at least a century and a half, their estates lying chiefly in the fen country and the Isle of Ely. The bishop elect had himself been archdeacon of Ely since 1268, and during his tenure of that office he had for some reason rendered himself unpopular to his Norfolk and Suffolk neighbours. There was deep discontent at his election, "and all with one consent cursed the whole convent, and especially the electors ;"¹ nevertheless, the king speedily confirmed the choice that had been made, and after the usual formalities had been complied with, Bishop RALPH was consecrated at Canterbury on Midlent Sunday, 28th March, 1289.

The year before this, Jerome of Ascoli,—general of the Franciscans,—had been chosen pope, and had assumed the name of Nicholas IV. ; he was animated by a passionate desire to promote a new crusade and to unite Christendom in one more supreme effort to recover the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels. Some few men of eminence were roused to enthusiasm by the pontiff's burning zeal, but the main body of the English clergy were fully convinced that the day for crusades was passed. They did not like the pope's dream the better because they were most severely taxed to give, if possible, effect to it. Tenth after tenth was exacted from them ; fresh imposts were laid upon them, and the collectors sent round the various dioceses showed no mercy to the poorest chaplain or the neediest parish priest.

¹ Cotton, "De Rege Edwardo," p. 169.

The money was handed over to the king, who took it readily enough, but showed no intention of taking the cross again. Matters did not improve when Nicholas IV. died, in April, 1292, and Archbishop Peckham in the following December. Once more, the cardinals contrived to keep the papacy vacant for two years and three months, and Edward I. was in no hurry to fill up the see of Canterbury. The Church of England was without a head, and the clergy without a champion. On the 4th of July, 1294, the king confiscated all the coin and treasure deposited in the sacristies of the monasteries and cathedral churches. The very next day the long interregnum in the papacy came to an end by the election of Pope Celestine V. ; but before the news could reach England the king had gone on to demand from the clergy half their incomes, and, monstrous as the requisition was, it was actually enforced.¹ In the following September, Robert Winchelsey was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, but things did not come to a crisis till two years later, when, in the Parliament assembled at Bury St. Edmunds, the archbishop firmly resisted any further concession, and ventured to brave the wrath of his sovereign. The clergy, as a body, were too much cowed and too impoverished to contemplate any open opposition, but a deputation was sent from the synod assembled at St. Paul's, on the 14th January, to expostulate with the king. Among the deputies

¹ For the general history of these exactions, see Stubbs's "Const. Hist.," ii., 126, 131, and 145. That the Priory of Norwich actually paid a half of all their revenues appears from Cotton, p. 256. Compare Gervase, ii., 306.

were the bishops of Norwich and the archdeacon of Norfolk, who appear to have been admitted to the royal presence at Castleacre, in Norfolk, between the 20th January and the 2nd February; they were treated with the utmost scorn, and sent home with the briefest answer.¹ The king became more and more exasperated, and with the increase of his embarrassments his violence increased beyond measure; but in the end the ecclesiastical difficulty was settled by a compromise—such as it was—only when the clergy had been pillaged to an extent which would be impossible for us to realise, and remains almost impossible to believe.

It is during the brief episcopate of Bishop RALPH that we first hear the voice of the East Anglian diocese speaking with authority in reply to certain interrogatories issued by Archbishop Peckham, in 1291, preparatory to the assembly of a Provincial Council on the subject of the projected Crusade.² The replies sent in speak well for the general intelligence of the East Anglian clergy; and are characterised by marked courage, independence, and manliness of tone.

Bishop RALPH had presided over the see of Norwich just ten years when by one of those audacious fiats which in the history of the papacy are only too common, he was removed from the East Anglian diocese. The see of Ely had become vacant, the

¹ Cotton, 318 *et seq.*; Gervase, ii., 314 *et seq.*; Edward I. was at Walsingham on the 2nd of February; Hardy's "Syllabus," i., 856.

² Cotton, 206 *et seq.*; Wilkins, "Conc.," ii., p. 287.

monks made choice of their Prior JOHN SALMON to succeed, though the king desired that his chancellor John Langton should be elected. When an appeal was made to Rome, the pope (Boniface VIII.) set aside both candidates, translated Bishop RALPH to Ely, and made JOHN SALMON bishop of Norwich. It was a compromise which served to weaken the hands of the king of England and strengthen the influence of the pope of Rome, while it gave the least possible offence to the Ely convent.

The new bishop was consecrated by Archbishop Winchelsey, at Canterbury, on the 5th of November, and early in the following month he was in his diocese. He did not show himself at Norwich till the beginning of January, and he seems very rarely to have resided there except for a few days at a time during his whole episcopate. For nearly six years he continued discharging his duties at home without any intermission and exhibiting a commendable activity in more ways than one. Towards the end of 1305 he disappears, leaving one Nicholas Whitchurch, a prebendary of Lincoln, as his vicar general. His absence may have been occasioned by his being sent on the king's business to Avignon;¹ he was back again in Norwich, in May, 1307. Next month he was sworn of the king's council, and for the rest of his life he is more conspicuous for the part he played in civil than in ecclesiastical affairs. Indeed, from November, 1307, till August, 1311, he was only twice in his diocese, for six months in 1308, and for a few weeks in

¹ Stubbs's "Const. Hist.," ii., 155.

1309.¹ In 1320 he was made chancellor in the room of Hotham, bishop of Ely, and it was while returning from an embassy to France, in 1325, that he fell sick, and was carried to the Priory of Folkestone, where he died on the 6th of July, after presiding over the see of Norwich nearly twenty-six years.

Bishop SALMON appears to have been a man of humble extraction, and had passed all his early life in the monastery of Ely. He was much given to building, as the great works carried out by him in the enlargement of the palace at Norwich showed. In his later years the cathedral cloisters were being worked at with much energy ;² but though he had been a monk and though it is said he presented many rich vestments to the priory, he was far less conspicuous as a spoiler of the parochial clergy than many of those bishops who preceded and followed him. One instance of his following the bad example set by others deserves to be recorded. He built a college for six priests with a chapel attached and a crypt or charnel-house under it, and endowed it after the usual fashion by alienating the tithes of one of the livings in his gift. The process was precisely similar to that with which we in our own time have become so familiar, whereby the endowment intended for supporting one object is applied to the carrying out of another. In the fourteenth century this was regarded as meritorious by some people, when only the secular or parochial clergy were despoiled for the benefit

¹ He took a prominent part in the synod summoned at St. Paul's in December, 1309.—Wilkins, ii., 312, 314.

² This appears from the entries in the Pitancier's Rolls.

of the Regulars ; we of the nineteenth century are less inclined to applaud it. Bishop SALMON's foundation has survived to our own times, though another alienation of the original endowment has changed his college of priests with their chapel and crypt into the Grammar school and Head-master's residence of the city of Norwich, the bishop's appropriation of the tithes still forming a portion of the endowment of the modernised foundation.

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When Bishop SALMON retired from the chancellorship in 1323 he was succeeded in that office by ROBERT BALDOK, archdeacon of Middlesex, who had been connected with the chancery for many years. He had recently been disappointed of the see of Winchester, which the king had endeavoured to obtain for him from the pope; for he had thrown in his lot with the Despensers, who at this time were at the height of their power. When Edward II. was summoned to do homage for Gascony to Charles IV. of France, in 1324, the plot for the destruction of the Despensers assumed a distinct shape. Bishop Stratford, who had secured for himself the bishopric of Winchester which BALDOK had desired to have, was sent out as ambassador from the king to the court of France; with him went WILLIAM AYERMIN, another of those clerks of the chancery who knew so well how to make use of their opportunities to enrich themselves and who had already heaped one rich prebend upon another for his own advantage. The French embassy failed, the envoys having no interest in its success but the pope was at Avignon, and in his hands all

Jessop has the following account of poor author for an account picture of Ayermin's acquisition of the see consult Grassi's article English Literature Review 70 (1955) Much of Jessop's story is simply information Thank you. Is the true elsewhere

English preferment that was worth having now rested. AYERMIN's name was not unknown to the pope, who had more than once been solicited by the weak king to provide for him¹ and it is pretty clear that he turned to account the occasion of his brief mission to the French court. In January, 1325, Bishop SALMON was sent over as envoy, and on the 7th of that month AYERMIN was chosen to the vacant see of Carlisle. He received the temporalities of that bishopric on the 19th of February and presumably enjoyed them for some months. When the question of his consecration came up the pope annulled the appointment. Just then Bishop SALMON died. Queen Isabella had deserted her husband and made common cause with his enemies; Edward II. and the Despensers stood alone. Almost the only man of mark who was true to his king at this crisis was BALDOK the chancellor; as a matter of course, he received his reward and on the 21st of July he was elected to succeed to the bishopric of Norwich, the king gladly giving his assent to his chancellor's election. Meanwhile AYERMIN had been deprived of his bishopric, and was not the man to lose his chance of getting another. Indeed, it looks as if the pope in quashing his appointment to Carlisle had "provided" him with a better see. Bishop SALMON was evidently a dying man; it was better for AYERMIN to bide his time. BALDOK, the chancellor, had scarcely been elected to the bishopric before he too was told that the pope could not allow him to be consecrated, and that in the lifetime

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¹ "Hist. MSS.," Fourth Report, p. 381.

of the previous bishop his successor had been nominated. As things were managed then it was idle to think of resisting the pope, and BALDOK forthwith resigned all claim to the see. This was on the 3rd September, AYERMIN was then in France and on the 15th of the month he was consecrated bishop of Norwich by two foreign bishops at the church of St. Germain des Près and forthwith started homewards.

Though the Chancellor BALDOK—thus a second time disappointed of his prize—made no resistance to the papal orders, he could do something to annoy his successful rival. He joined with the younger Despenser in recommending the king to withhold the temporalities of the see, and they were actually retained in the king's hands, and paid into the exchequer, until Bishop AYERMIN's petition for their restitution was at length granted, after a delay of nearly two years, and only when Edward III. had succeeded to the crown. Before that event came to pass the cause of the Despensers had utterly collapsed, the Chancellor BALDOK had died miserably in Newgate, and AYERMIN, who had supplanted him in his bishopric, had superseded him too as keeper of the great seal. It was a time of shameful corruption among all classes, when in Church and State every man was seeking his own, none the things which are Jesus Christ's. It is humiliating to have to confess that the new bishop of Norwich stands out conspicuous before others for his insatiable greed and worldliness.¹ Rarely in his diocese, he left the

¹ At the time of his being promoted to the see of Norwich he was holding no less than *seven* prebendal stalls in various

administration of it to his officials, while he himself was immersed in politics, or in amassing money with a view to found a family which should perpetuate his name. He died in London on the 27th March, 1336, after an episcopate of little more than ten years, during which, from anything that appears, he did less in and for his bishopric than any of those who went before him.

Two days after Bishop AYERMIN's death the monks of Norwich elected one of their own body—THOMAS DE HEMENHALL, a Norfolk man, to succeed. The days of free election to bishoprics had gone by, and even royal favourites had small chance of preferment if they trusted to kingly patronage alone. The English bishoprics were in the hands of the pope, to deal with almost as he pleased; and though king and people, high and low, might protest, present *gravamina*, or even pass statutes against papal aggression, all was of little avail. Except during the period of the great papal schism, no bishop of Norwich was again consecrated to the see unless by papal *provision* or direct appointment till the fifteenth century had all but closed, and the final rupture was at hand. At the time we are now concerned with, it was quite enough to destroy any man's chance of obtaining an English bishopric that he had been chosen by the electors in

cathedrals; *two* of them were in the church of Lincoln, and *two* in the church of York. His brother Richard was made vicar-general of the diocese of Norwich, and he held this post and many other preferments together with the chancellorship of Salisbury. Another brother, Adam, became archdeacon of Norfolk.

whom *theoretically* the appointment was vested, and THOMAS OF HEMENHALL must have been perfectly well aware that he would not be accepted by the pope, nor consecrated bishop, but he made his way to Avignon nevertheless, where, as a matter of course, Benedict XII. annulled the election.

Three weeks after the vacancy had occurred in the see of Norwich, Hotham, bishop of Ely, had died. Into that bishopric the pope translated Simon Montague, bishop of Worcester; he made HEMENHALL bishop of Worcester, and conferred the see of Norwich upon Dr. ANTONY BEK, dean of Lincoln, who had come to Avignon a few weeks before Bishop AYERMIN's death, probably with a view to obtain the promise of the bishopric when it should fall in.

Bishop ANTONY BEK was consecrated by the pope at Avignon on the 30th March, 1337, and, returning to England, received the temporalities from the king on the 9th July. Though the new bishop was proud of his ancestry, and imperious in temper, he was at any rate a man of learning and principle, and fearless and inflexible when standing up for what he believed to be right; I cannot find that he ever left the work of his diocese to others,¹ and he was very rarely absent from it. He evidently found it in a deplorable condition, but he was too old a man to do much in the way of reform, even if he had been ever so zealous and in earnest. One of his first acts was to sue his predecessor's executors for dilapidation and a dis-

¹ There is nothing in his Register to bear out the assertion of Pitts, quoted by Blomefield, vol. iii., p. 505, v. 6.

graceful waste of the property of the see,¹ and he appears to have recovered nearly nineteen hundred pounds sterling, an enormous sum in the days of Edward III. When Archbishop Stratford attempted to hold a visitation of the Norwich diocese, Bishop BEK took exception to the primate's carrying out his intention (on what ground has not been made clear to us); and when the archbishop persisted in the attempt, and obtained, moreover, the support of the king, even so he could not be persuaded to give way, but appealed to the pope against the world. Bishop BEK was, before all things, a bishop, and if he had lived in the days of Anselm and Becket, history would have had more to tell of a prelate at once so resolute and aggressive. His register leaves upon us the impression of his having been a friend of scholars, and his best preferment was bestowed upon graduates of the Universities. But he was no friend to monks; indeed, he tried to rule them with a rod of iron, and to make the priory of Norwich subject to the bishop of the see. In this, it is said, he failed. He died on the 19th of December, 1343, in the seventh year of his episcopate, and the seventy-ninth year of his age.²

Bishop BEK was free from one vice, at any rate; he is the first bishop of Norwich of whom I can find no evidence that he ever robbed the parochial clergy to enrich a religious house. His successor made up

¹ "Harl. MS.," 3,720, f. xiii.

² He was born on the day of the battle of Evesham, Aug. 4, 1265 ("Harl. MS.," *u. s.*). He had been elected to the see of Lincoln as far back as 1320, but the pope, as usual, quashed his election.

for any lack of love towards the Regulars by proving himself the most outrageous spoiler of the parish priests that the see of Norwich has ever known. This was WILLIAM BATEMAN, son of a wealthy citizen of Norwich, who had been no less than eleven times bailiff of the city,¹ and one of its representatives in the Parliament of 1326. His son, the future bishop, is said to have received his education in his native city, and may, not improbably, have been one of those scholars whom the priory about this time supported at Cambridge. He certainly proceeded Doctor of Civil Law in that University, and as early as 1328 was collated to the archdeaconry of Norwich by Bishop AYERMIN. Soon after this he was sent to Avignon, and he rose high in the favour of Pope John XXII. His great wealth insured him preferment, and when Bishop BEK died Clement VI. bestowed upon him the vacant see, much to the joy of the Norwich monks, who had gone through the form of electing him unanimously, and of the citizens who looked upon his father's son as one of themselves. He was consecrated by the pope himself at Avignon, and shortly afterwards he took possession of his diocese and proceeded to hold a visitation of it, in which he showed extraordinary boldness. Not content with inspecting the Norwich Priory, he went on to assert his episcopal authority over the far more powerful and wealthy Abbey of St. Edmunds, and thereby involved himself in costly and protracted litigation with the monastery and the large body of its partizans, who were pre-

There was no *Mayor* of Norwich till 1403, Blomefield, vol. iii., 12.

pared to go all lengths in resisting episcopal jurisdiction. Three years of Bishop BATEMAN's life were embittered by this vexatious conflict. The monks were too strong for the bishop, and he suffered severely for his rash attempt, as others had suffered before him. During those years there was "great internal prosperity in England as well as brilliant success abroad," and when King Edward III. returned in the autumn of 1347, the victory of Crécy, the defeat and imprisonment of David II., king of Scotland, and the capture of Calais, were among the substantial results of the costly warfare. The king's return seems to have brought the bishop some relief from the troubles into which his quarrel with the great abbey had plunged him, and we hear no more of contentions in the law courts; but the whole diocese had been made to suffer grievously during the course of the struggle.¹ Next year was, says Walsingham, a year of peace and glory, and though it closed with a very heavy rainfall, this did not prevent the price of corn falling lower than it had been at for some time; but in the year 1349 came the visitation of the great plague.² English history can tell of no calamity so widespread and so terrible in its incidence, and no part of the kingdom suffered more dreadfully than East Anglia did from the scourge. The institution books of the diocese tell their own tale; during the five years comprehended between

¹ See Blomefield, iii., 508.

² The Bridlington Chron. says it appeared first at Melcombe, in July, 1347, and lasted two years. "Chron. Ed. I. and Ed. II." (Stubbs), note ii., p. 149.

the 25th March, 1344, and the same day of 1349, the annual average of institutions of all kinds amounts to exactly 81. During the next year ending 25th March, 1350, no less than 831 persons received institution within the diocese. In the spring of 1349 Bishop BATEMAN was absent, employed in conducting negotiations for peace between England and France; he returned to Norfolk in the beginning of June to find his brother, Sir Bartholomew Bateman, of Gillingham, dead, and the plague raging with awful severity. During the next two months the three chief nunneries in the diocese, Bungay, Carrow, and Ridlingfield, lost their prioresses. All the canons of Mount Joye in Heveringland died. At Hickling only a single canon survived, and he a novice who made his profession to the prior as he lay dying. At Walsingham, at Thetford, at Westacre, at the great Abbey of St. Benet's, Hulm, the same frightful mortality prevailed, and in six months no less than twenty-one religious houses had lost their rulers. In the city of Norwich it is said that the mortality was most frightful; in Yarmouth it was scarcely less; Lynn seems to have escaped with comparative immunity. Early in the autumn the bishop made application to the pope for direction, and, on the 13th of October, Clement VI. addressed to him a bull, wherein provision was made against the consequences of the dreadful visitation of pestilence. In view of the serious falling off in the supply of clergy, and the fact that, as a result of that falling off, many parishes were left without any parsons to serve them, the bishop was authorised to ordain sixty young men to the ministry, who might be two

years below the canonical age, provided that they approved themselves on examination fit and proper persons to receive holy orders ; in all cases, however, the candidates must have completed their twenty-first year. It is much to the credit of Bishop BATEMAN that, so far from availing himself to the utmost of the papal dispensation, he exercised the right conveyed with scrupulous reserve, and only five instances occur in his register of candidates under the canonical age being admitted to a cure of souls. The fact that this immense strain upon the *reserve* of clergy who were unbeneficed at the outbreak of the plague did not exhaust the supply to a far greater extent than appears to have been the case, indicates that the number of clergy in the diocese of Norwich, in the middle of the fourteenth century, must have been very large, and, consequently, that the general level of education in the diocese was much higher than is often assumed to have been the case. The instances of benefices bestowed upon any below the priesthood are rare, and in almost every instance they are the nominees of the king, or the nobility, whom it would have been idle to gainsay. Judging by the way in which the great lords exercised their patronage in the East Anglian diocese at this period, it is plain that the laity were not ashamed to make merchandise of their patronage, and whether the clergy were or were not unconscionable in their readiness to buy preferment, the laity were ready enough to sell.

During all this terrible time Bishop BATEMAN never left his diocese for a day. In the single month of July

he personally instituted 207 persons. Till the 9th of the month he was at Norwich, the plague making awful havoc all round him. On the 10th he moved to Hoxne, and there in a single day instituted twenty persons; from this time till the pestilence abated he moved about from place to place, rarely staying more than a fortnight in any one house, and followed everywhere by the troops of clergy, who came to be admitted to the livings of such as had died. By April, 1350, the mortality had so much abated that things had returned to their normal condition; but in a single year the whole face of the diocese must have changed. Bearing in mind that the episcopal records take no account of deaths in the monasteries, except where the head of the house was carried off; that none of the unbeneficed clergy are noticed except where they were presented with preferment; that the mendicant orders, who were labouring among the townspeople, and were hardly under episcopal jurisdiction, never came before the bishop at all,—it is impossible to estimate the number of clergy in the diocese of Norwich whom the “Black Death” carried off at less than two thousand. The effect of so huge a calamity it is almost impossible for us now to conceive; the smaller benefices could not be filled up, many must have remained for years without incumbents. It is observable that, in the episcopate of Bishop TOTTINGTON, that prelate set himself, in several cases, to unite two livings to be held by the same person, as if the difficulty of filling the less valuable cures had continued even so long after the great plague.

Bishop BATEMAN seems to have persuaded himself that all hope for the future of his diocese lay in strengthening the hands of the Regulars at the expense of the secular clergy, and he lost no opportunity of alienating the endowments of a country cure and handing them over to a decaying religious house, or to the use of the college which he set himself to found at Cambridge, as a theological seminary for his own diocese. This college—Trinity Hall—was intended especially as a school of civil law.¹ As time went on, and the study of civil law and divinity became divorced, the Bishop's foundation ceased to be, in any sense, a theological seminary; and at the present day it continues to be, as it has been for long, more of a *law college* than any other at either of the universities. The bishop was not the only founder of an educational endowment for the diocese. The example had been set two years before the Black Death, by Edmund Gonville, rector of Terrington, who, in January, 1347, had already given property in Cambridge for the endowment of the college which received his name, though, two centuries later, the great accession to its original endowments which Dr. Caius bestowed upon Gonville Hall, caused the name of the later benefactor to take precedence of the earlier one. The year after the Black Death again another college in Cambridge—

¹ The notion, alluded to by Blomefield, that Edward Gonville's college at *Rushworth* was intended to be a kind of preparatory school to his college at Cambridge, is erroneous. *Rushworth* was founded as early as 1342, "*Bodl. Chart.*," p. 211; there is nothing to show that it had any connexion with education.

the second in twenty-eight years—was founded, viz., the college of Corpus Christi; and this, too, became eventually one of the great Norfolk colleges, when Archbishop Parker added so munificently to its resources in the after-times; nor was the bishop's example without effect, for we find that his chancellor, Dr. Richard Lyng, followed closely in his steps; and though not rich enough to found a college, yet he rendered himself conspicuous by his liberal gift to the university for the assistance of needy scholars. If Bishop BATEMAN and others about him were robbers of churches, they had at any rate no mean and selfish aim in their pillage; doubtless they persuaded themselves that it was necessary to further the cause of learning, and that in such a cause it was pardonable to do evil in view of the great good that might come.

Bishop BATEMAN died at Avignon on the 6th January, 1355, while employed in one of the many embassies on which he was sent by Edward III., and Pope Innocent VI. appointed as his successor THOMAS PERCY, brother of Henry, Earl of Northumberland, a young man under twenty-two years of age.

CHAPTER VIII.

DURING THE PAPAL SCHISM.

WHEN Bishop PERCY succeeded to the see of Norwich, the friars had been at work in East Anglia for just 130 years. The action of those forces which are more essentially political we have caught some glimpses of in the course of our narrative ; but these touch only the surface of things, and have to do with the fortunes of the Church only, as it is a corporation concerned with the state in certain relations with the people. The history of a diocese is only half written when nothing more than a record of the doings of its principal officials is set down ; a complete diocesan history, if such a work were possible, would comprehend not only a summary of the external fortunes or the administration of the rulers, but a record, too, of the religious life, the pulsations of the heart of the people, their aspirations, their errors while groping for the truth, the vagaries of their fanaticism, their passionate cries for more light in the thick darkness or at the dawn. Happy is the land that has no history—is true of nations considered as aggregates of human creatures to whom the earthly life is everything : is it true of the Church, the life of whose members is concerned with a great hope “beyond the veil”?

If we are to judge of the religious condition of

the diocese of Norwich during the period now under review, we must seek for evidence in the condition of the monasteries, the notices of the work done by the Mendicant orders, the traces of synodical action, and the habits of life and prevailing sentiment in the country parishes. Unfortunately, the evidence is very defective; we are left to draw our inferences from mere fragments of information that we come upon incidentally in miscellaneous, and often unpromising, sources. It is certain, however, that the influences of the friars for good or evil was very powerful and very extensive. With them the action of voluntaryism came in precisely where it was most wanted—namely, in the towns. There was scarcely a town in Norfolk or Suffolk of any importance that had not been despoiled of its endowments by the grasping hands of the monastic bodies. At Norwich, Yarmouth, and Lynn, at Swaffham, East Dereham, and Wymondham, at Bungay, Stowmarket, and Aylsham the rectorial tithes and the glebe had been absorbed by the religious houses. The abbeyes of St. Edmund and of St. Benet's Hulm, indeed all the older monasteries, had for generations been appropriating the rectories all over East Anglia, and leaving the vicars, who were in theory mere stipendiary curates, though irremovable, to the tender mercies of their parishioners, on whose offerings, more or less voluntary, they had to depend for their subsistence. In many cases the impropiators laid claim even to a proportion of the fees and offerings.

As a consequence of this pillage, the town clergy were very needy and of a lower status than those

in the country; in fact, they stood to the benefited clergy in the villages pretty much in the same relation that too many of the disheartened and ill-provided townsmen in the present day stand to their more fortunate brethren in the country parishes. The friars threw themselves unreservedly upon the voluntary principle; they would have no endowments; these had been tried and found wanting. Let them go! Nay, the parochial system in the towns had been tried and found wanting, too. Let that also go! The friars never asked in what parish this street or that house lay; wherever they were wanted there they came and there they ministered. The result was that, speaking within certain limits, the whole work of evangelising the masses had rapidly fallen into the hands of the Mendicant orders, and the more they prospered the poorer the town clergy became. There were constant complaints on the part of these latter, constant attempts to prevent the Mendicants from burying in their new churchyards, and so robbing the vicars of the burial fees; quarrelling, soreness, and bitter jealousy were chronic. The monks had swept away the endowments, now the friars were sweeping away the fees. The country parson, secure of his position, was comparatively indifferent; in the villages there could be no hope for voluntarism, and into the villages the friars rarely came, and they never stayed. But upon the monasteries they were exercising an immense influence, directly and indirectly, and, on the whole, it was an influence for good. We trace it in the memorable visitation of the East Anglian monasteries in 1281, by Archbishop Peckham, the first

Franciscan who was primate; or in the attempt of Archbishop Winchelsey in 1298 to bring about a reform of the conventual life at Canterbury; in the now general practice of the monasteries sending scholars to the universities; in the great stimulus given to intellectual life; in the taste for scientific culture, and the zeal shown in collecting libraries. Of the whole number of Norfolk and Suffolk men whose names appear in the roll of distinguished men of letters during the fourteenth century nearly two-thirds belonged to the Mendicant orders. The Carmelites boasted of none of their brethren with more pride than of John of Baconsthorpe. The Franciscans have no one more worthy of renown than Roger Bacon. When William of Occam was delivering his heaviest blows against Pope John XXII., it was a Norfolk man, John of Walsingham, a Carmelite of Burnham, who was chosen to answer him. The country parsons were, it seems, doing their duty quietly and unobtrusively, and occupying almost exactly the same social position that they do at the present day, but the great preachers in the town pulpits, the teachers and lecturers in the universities, the educators of the country, were friars, in very large proportion.

We have no such direct evidence of the condition of the diocese of Norwich as that which exists for the diocese of Winchester at the beginning of the fourteenth century, yet there is good reason for believing that the condition of the East Anglian see was not very different from the other. The number of clergy was largely in excess of the cures, though it must

be remembered that the term *clerk* in those days was applied to any one who lived by his brains, the *clerks* being, in fact, the professional classes, and comprehending among themselves scores of men in every diocese who had no intention of exercising any spiritual function, or of being in any sense ministers of religion. Yet even so there was, we find, a crowd of *priests*, unemployed, living on their means or on their friends, who gave the bishops much trouble by taking work irregularly and pocketing the fees. There were disputes between rectors and curates (vicars), and quarrels between the clergy and their parishioners, as to who should keep up the fences of the churchyards. There were, too, among the clergy, some who dressed like laymen, and there were parishes too poor to provide the necessary church furniture, so that, when the bishop was on his visitation, one parson would borrow another's vestments to make a good appearance before his diocesan ; but, on the whole, the impression left upon us is favourable to the clergy ; they were obviously better than their times. Some were scandalous, some were needy, but the age was coarse and rough : the records of crime and violence, the grossness and the cruelty of all classes in the fourteenth century, make it only too evident that the moral instincts of the nation at large were feeble, and the consciences of men ill-instructed and ill-trained. Nevertheless, there has been an evident advance from earlier times, and the abominations with which the earlier penitentiaries deal, have not only diminished, but have almost disappeared, though brigandage, bloodshed, and suicide were prevalent to an

extent which, if the evidence were not overwhelming, would be incredible.

Against this moral obliquity and coarseness of tone, the friars were still labouring in the towns, but they had already begun to deteriorate. St. Francis was right; the masses are to be dealt with only by men living among the masses. The friars, though true to their earlier vows, so far as to hold no real property, before the fourteenth century had begun, had already violated the spirit of those vows by increasing the size and convenience of their conventual buildings, by the magnificence of their churches, and, above all, by their splendid libraries. The Carmelites of Norfolk had a European reputation for learning. Young men of active intellect and studious habits, ambitious of making for themselves a name, attached themselves to the Mendicant orders, while the monasteries, and especially the houses of Augustinian canons, were the comfortable homes of younger sons of the gentry, living the kind of life which Fellows of Colleges lived at Cambridge or Oxford till quite recent times. The glimpses we get of the conventual life in the priories of Wymondham and Binham leave, on the whole, a favourable impression, and when we hear of disorders and irregularities elsewhere, as at the Premonstratensian Abbey of Wendling in 1345,¹ it is only by finding that an inquiry has been instituted with a view to correct the evils complained of. On the other hand, the exactions levied upon the less powerful religious houses were enormous, and

¹ Carthew's "Launditch," i., 313.

the facility with which a prior or an abbess could get a convent into a condition of hopeless embarrassment was the cause of many a small foundation being incorporated with a larger in some cases, as when the smaller priories of Massingham and Peterstone were absorbed by that of Westacre, or Wormegay by the canons of Pentney, while in other cases a convent ceased to exist, as the Nunnery of Lyng, or was actually sold, as the Benedictine Priory of Wynwaloe was in 1321. No surer proof could be adduced that the work of the monasteries was done when the friars came over to England, than is furnished by the fact that not a single instance occurs of any monastery of the old type having been set up in the diocese of Norwich after the reign of Henry III. Before the fourteenth century closed even the friaries had ceased to be founded, and the effect of the awakening of a new intellectual life had become apparent by the endowments of those colleges of which Rushworth College was one of the earliest examples.

If the episcopate of THOMAS BLUNDEVILLE marks an epoch, because during his time the Mendicant orders first settled among us, not the less so does that of THOMAS PERCY, of whose administration we know so little. Young though he was when he was promoted to the see, he was already a graduate of Oxford, and therefore certainly no unlettered ecclesiastic. Bradwardine, the last of the great schoolmen whom Oxford could boast of, died of the Black Death in 1349. But Richard Fitzralph, archbishop of Armagh, was showing himself the uncompromising enemy of the Mendicants, and the fierce warfare

between the Realists and the Nominalists was at its height.

When Bishop PERCY was consecrated at Lambeth, in January, 1356, John Wickliffe had been a leading teacher at Oxford for some years. The future bishop must have seen him often; probably often had listened to him among the crowd of young enthusiasts who looked to him as the bringer-in of new things. There is some reason to believe that Bishop PERCY had no kindly feeling towards the monks on his first coming to the see, and it is significant that the earliest charter wherein his name occurs is one which has to do with the reunion of the two moieties into which the living of Eggemere had been divided in earlier times. In the sixth year of his episcopate, another terrible outbreak of pestilence burst upon the country. This time East Anglia escaped with comparative immunity, and there is no evidence to show that there was any abnormal mortality among the clergy or laity. Outside the diocese it was otherwise; the upper classes especially suffered, and in a single year the bishops of London, Ely, Worcester, and St. David's, fell victims to the scourge. After the plague came a mighty wind that blew, and the tremendous hurricane on St. Anthony's Day, January 17th, 1362, did not spare the cathedral; the lofty belfry on the central tower succumbed to the fury of the gale, and came crashing down upon the roof of the choir. The young bishop lost no time in repairing the damage, and, after himself contributing largely, he imposed an income-tax of ninepence in the pound upon his clergy for the restoration of the mother church, and the

glorious clerestory of the choir is the work of his episcopate.¹

Whatever else he may have been, he was no courtier; he seems to have remained quietly in his diocese, and never to have left it. In the domestic or foreign politics of the country he took no part. He died at his manor of Blofield on the 8th August, 1369, little more than thirty-five years of age.

Chaucer and Gower were a few years his seniors. The author of "Piers Plowman's Vision," as it is called, mentions the hurricane of 1362 as of recent occurrence. Sir John Mandeville, the traveller, survived him by two years. The year before he died, John Wickliffe had published his work on "Dominion," and was probably already issuing his translation of the Bible. The glory of King Edward had begun seriously to wane, and the Black Prince was stricken with the mortal disease which was so soon to bring him to his grave.

When Bishop PERCY died, the pope was once more in residence at Rome. For more than sixty years the supreme pontiffs had been kept away from Italy, and had held their court at Avignon. No successor of St. Peter had been seen in the eternal city since Benedict XI. left it on the 3rd April, 1304. The return of Urban V. in August, 1367, and the security which he enjoyed during his brief sojourn, were mainly due to the masterly generalship of two Englishmen, Sir John Hawkwood, the great captain of

¹ The stone vaulting of the clerestory was added about a century later by Bishop GOLDWELL, who substituted it for the timber roof of Bishop PERCY.

the age, and his scarcely less renowned colleague, Sir Henry le Despenser. Sir Henry was a younger son of Edward le Despenser, by Anne, daughter of Henry Lord Ferrers of Groby, and was descended from Joan, second daughter of King Edward I. By taste and education he was a soldier, and as a soldier he had acquired already a European reputation. He was at the pope's side when the news of the vacancy in the see of Norwich reached Rome, and he had deserved well of the pontiff, who yet had little to reward his supporters with, except such Church preferment as it might be in his power to bestow. How the affair was managed we are not told, but, on April 20th, 1370, HENRY LE DESPENSER was consecrated at Rome bishop of Norwich, and on August 14th he received the temporalities of the see, being described in the pope's bull as canon of Salisbury.¹ I cannot find that he saw his diocese for two years after his appointment, though the institution books show that, when in residence, he was not remiss in the routine work of his office. His ordinations were usually carried on by one or another of the many bishops with outlandish titles² who were at this time visiting in England. These were frequently members of some religious house exempt from episcopal jurisdiction, which preferred to have a bishop of its own to hold ordinations and confirmations

¹ It does not at all follow that he was therefore in Holy Orders. On the subject of laymen holding cathedral preferment see a suggestive note in Cotton's "Fast. Eccl. Hibern." vol. i., p. 10.

² See note (C).

independently of the bishop of the diocese, whom, however, it was politic to assist upon occasion by acting as co-adjutor or suffragan, either during his absence or when indolence or indisposition kept him at home.

Of Bishop DESPENSER, or of his diocese, we hear but little during the early years of his episcopate: one incidental notice, however, must not be passed over. In May, 1371, Convocation agreed to a grant of £50,000 to be levied upon the clergy of the two provinces of Canterbury and York. From Bishop DESPENSER'S certificate it appears that the diocese at this time contained an aggregate of 1321 "parishes," 806 in Norfolk and 515 in Suffolk, which were required to contribute on the whole no less than £6,580. The bishop is said to have been popular among the parochial clergy, but he was no friend of the Regulars, with whom he was more than once in serious conflict. Godwin says, there was a dispute between him and the Norwich Priory which lasted for fifteen years, and in 1380 he embroiled himself with the great abbey of St. Alban's by claiming authority over the prior of Wymondham, whom he nominated as his collector for levying a royal subsidy. As usual the abbey gained the day.

When the great agrarian rebellion of 1381 broke out, Bishop DESPENSER'S soldierly training was once more called into exercise. The rebellion first began at Dartford, in Kent, on the 5th of June; on the 13th the Kent and Essex men having united their forces were in possession of London, and next day they murdered the chancellor, the treasurer, and

Simon Sudbury, archbishop of Canterbury. On the 15th Wat Tyler was slain in Smithfield, and on that same day the Suffolk men began their excesses at Mildenhall under John Wrawe, and proceeded to murder Sir John Cavendish, chief justice of the King's Bench, the prior of St. Edmunds, and others of less note. In Norfolk the rebel leader was John Litester, a dyer of Norwich, who styled himself the "King of the Commons" and whose seemed to be carrying all before him. On the 15th the bishop was in residence at Norwich. The news of Tyler's death could hardly have reached Norfolk for a day or two, but messengers from Suffolk would be likely to bring their alarming tidings to the bishop's palace on the night after the tragedy. There was no time to be lost: Litester had planted a motley host somewhere near the town of North Walsham, fifteen or sixteen miles to the north of Norwich, and the peasantry were flocking into his camp in great numbers; there was a danger lest the Norfolk and Suffolk men should form a junction and co-operate to attack Norwich. The bishop rode off to the westward, a distance of nearly eighty miles as the crow flies, and reached one of his manor houses at Burleigh, near Stamford, where he hoped to raise a force. It is said that he started from Burleigh with no more than eight lances, but with them and a small band of archers he came upon a detachment of Suffolk rebels near Newmarket and fell upon them with terrible effect, took two of their leaders prisoners, slew them, fixed their heads upon spikes at Newmarket, and turning again to the north, and leaving the Suffolk insurgents to themselves, he

hurried on to deliver his next blow at Litester and the Norfolk rioters.

Everywhere along the line of his rapid march he gathered fresh adherents and hearing that Litester was occupying an intrenched camp in the neighbourhood of North Walsham, he attacked him with irresistible fury. The Commons were routed without making a stand and a hideous slaughter of the poor creatures followed, Litester was taken and hanged without delay, the bishop himself attending him to the gallows. On the 1st of July we find the prelate back again in Norwich, instituting clergy to their benefices as if nothing particular had occurred. The rebellion was at an end, and when men began to discuss the causes of the outbreak they attributed it to every cause but the right one, some saying that the friars had fomented discontent among the masses, and some that the itinerant preachers whom Wickliffe had sent forth to spread his doctrines among the populace were the stirrers up of all the mischief. One thing is pretty certain, namely, that the bishop himself after his display of martial prowess was very much more feared than loved, and the year after the revolt of the peasantry, a formidable plot was laid against his life, the design being to seize the abbey of St. Benet's Hulm, and to use it as a base of operations in a new rebellion that was contemplated. The conspiracy was discovered in time and came to nothing. Next year Bishop DESPENSER received a commission from Pope Urban V. to lead a crusade against the anti-pope's supporters in France, and once more engaged in his congenial pursuit of war. The history of

that campaign and what came of it may be read elsewhere.

In the council held in London in May, 1382, the bishop of Norwich took no part ; he never pretended to be a scholar or divine. Like most soldiers, he had no toleration for new-fangled notions, and he was conspicuous as a determined opponent of the Lollards. Let other bishops argue and discuss, hold synods, and indulge in controversy, Bishop DESPENSER would waste no time with heretics ; he knew his own mind, and—"be his name for ever blessed," says Walsingham—"he swore an oath, and never regretted it, that if any of that perverse sect of Lollards should presume to preach in his diocese he should be given to the fire or lose his head. However great the number of that faction," he adds, "never a one of them, knowing their man, was willing to hurry into martyrdom, whence it came to pass that in his bishopric faith and religion remained inviolate."

Nevertheless, it was in the diocese of Norwich, and in Bishop DESPENSER'S days, that William Sawtre,—the first Englishman that suffered death for preaching heresy,—began to publish his opinions. He was a chaplain of the parish of St. Margarets, Lynn, and while officiating there he received a citation to appear before the bishop at Elmham on the 1st May, 1399 ; here he renounced his errors in the bishop's chapel on the 25th May, and next day publicly recanted at Lynn, and swore to preach such doctrines no more. About two years after this he again fell into trouble in the diocese of London. Probably, as was afterwards the case with Bilney, his conscience gave him

no rest for his previous weakness, and, having been put upon his trial as a relapsed heretic, he was degraded from his orders and condemned to be burned on the 26th of February, 1401.

For more than thirty-six years did Bishop DESPENSER rule over his see, and he died at last, leaving no will behind him, on the 23rd August, 1406. "A man," says Walsingham, "who, as he was the most consummate soldier of his time, so did he not forget the debt he owed to the pope." The pope could, and did, make him a bishop; he could not, and did not wish to unmake the soldier. Posterity has given him the name by which he is known,—“The fighting bishop of Norwich.”

During this episcopate a serious dispute occurred between the bishop and the Norwich priory, which seems to have lasted some time. We are ignorant of the grounds of the quarrel, but there was an appeal to Rome, and the matter was settled at last, in 1396, by the award of Cardinal Cosmato Mighorati, the collector of the papal revenue in England, who eventually became Pope Innocent VII.¹

Much energy was shown towards the close of the fourteenth century in beautifying the cathedral, probably in continuation or completion of the great undertakings begun in Bishop PERCY's time; and in the archives of Westminster Abbey there is still preserved a bull of Pope Boniface IX. [A.D. 1399] granting an indulgence to all such as should contribute to the building of the mother church at Norwich.

¹ “Fifth Hist. MSS. Reports,” p. 450.

The great schism in the papacy, which began in 1378, was not an unmixed evil in the eyes of English statesmen desirous of resisting the aggressive policy of the Roman see; but though the statute of Provisors was re-enacted in 1390, and the still more trenchant statute of Præmunire in 1393, the weakness of the government of Richard II. and the intrigues of the political parties contrived to rob these enactments of much of their force.¹ It was not till Henry IV. became king, and then only for a very little while, that the election to English bishoprics became in any sense free from the dictation or control of the pope. For the first time for many a long day the monks of Norwich were allowed freely to choose a successor to Bishop DESPENSER, and once more they chose a monk—their own prior—ALEXANDER OF TOTTINGTON, and, as his name indicates, a Norfolk man. A picturesque account of his election in the chapter-house has come down to us, and the unanimity with which he was welcomed by all classes, speaks highly for his blameless life and the high estimation in which he was held. He was consecrated at Gloucester 23rd October, 1407, and held the bishopric for less than six years, dying 28th April, 1413. We hear little more of him than that he spent large sums in repairing the bishop's houses at Norwich and elsewhere which had fallen into great decay. His successor was RICHARD COURTENAY, of the family of the earls of Devon, and nephew of William Courtenay, archbishop of Canterbury, who died in

¹ Stubbs's "Const. Hist.," § 708.

1396. His kinship to the primate soon brought him preferment,¹ but something else besides high birth must have helped to make him four times chancellor of the University of Oxford in an age when such a position implied more than mere titular distinction. We know him to have been a man of many gifts, who was so constantly employed in offices of trust by Henry IV. and Henry V. that he never found time to be installed at Norwich, and left the palace, and, indeed, the entire administration of the diocese to John, the archbishop of Smyrna, of whom we have heard before. Bishop COURTENAY held the bishopric of Norwich for two years and four days. During those two years the archbishop of Smyrna ordained at Norwich 128 subdeacons, 132 deacons, and 114 priests, all whose names are to be found on the records. It seems to have been a peculiarity in the diocese of Norwich that, except in the cases where an applicant for holy orders had been presented with a living, every candidate gave the name of some religious house as his title for ordination,—on what theory I am unable to explain.

¹ He became successively Dean of St. Asaph, Canon of York, and Dean of Wells.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

SINCE the time when Bishop DESPENSER had shown his terrible vigour against malcontents in Church or State, had drawn his sword against rebels in 1381, charged Litester at North Walsham, forced William Sawtre to recant his heresies at Elmham in 1399, and made John Edward abjure in 1405, there had been no persecution in the diocese of Norwich. Bishop TOTTINGTON was loved and respected; Bishop COURTENAY was never in his diocese at all; but the leaven of Wickliffe's doctrine, the leaven of Lollardism, had been working, and there was much murmuring and discontent. Among the masses there was a great deal of vague talk, which, if it meant anything, meant the preaching of communism and the spoliation of the rich; while among the religious fanatics the favourite teachers were those who denounced the clergy, and averred that some of the most sacred truths, which the Church had taught from the earliest times, were the inventions of men who had gone astray. The discontented, however different their grievances, made common cause, and the "party of order" in Church and State found it necessary to unite in resisting the forces arraigned against it. The Lollards were a motley throng without organisation,

without leaders, and without any definite religious or political creed : their tenets were in the chaotic stage, or rather, they were a nebulous mass in which, whatever there was of light was the light of luminous vapour not yet fixed into form. It was only a question of time as to when the conflict between the classes in Church and State which had everything to lose and the classes which had everything to gain by revolution should begin, and the time was at hand.

Henry IV. died 20th March, 1413. On the next day Archbishop Arundel was, from reasons of State, removed from the chancellorship, and he immediately laid a proposition before the Parliament to commence active proceedings against the Lollards. The result was that Sir John Oldcastle, a personal friend of Henry V., and who had commanded the Burgundian force in the combat before St. Cloud in 1411, was brought before the Archbishop on a charge of heresy on the 23rd September¹ and condemned on the 25th. On being taken back to the Tower he made his escape, and for four years he managed to elude his persecutors, but he was caught and slaughtered at last.² Meanwhile the Lollards were everywhere restless and angry, and more than one attempt was made to stir up the party to a general rising; they failed signally, but the outlook in Church and State was disquieting. It was even said that one of the motives urging Henry V. to the war with France, was the hope of turning the thoughts of his people from domestic to foreign politics.

¹ Bishop COURTENAY was consecrated at Windsor on the 17th.

² He was hanged and burned on the 14th December, 1417.

On the 24th July, 1415, the king made his will, appointing Bishop COURTENAY one of his executors, and on the 14th August the English army landed at the mouth of the Seine. In September Harfleur was besieged; and, while the army was encamped before the town, the bishop of Norwich, who was in the royal suite, fell sick and died on the 15th of the month, just a week before the place capitulated. The battle of Agincourt was fought on the 25th October, and on the 23rd November the king entered London in triumph. No time can have been lost in forwarding to the priory at Norwich the *congé d'élire* for choosing a successor to Bishop COURTENAY, for on the 25th November the king wrote to the pope to confirm the election of JOHN WAKERING, archdeacon of Canterbury, to the Bishopric of Norwich.

The new bishop was another of the great lawyers for whose services ecclesiastical preferment was reserved. As early as 1395 he had occupied an important position in the Chancery, and he had been Master of the Rolls from 1405 to this same year, 1415. While filling that office he was also archdeacon of Canterbury, and was one of the most prominent personages in the kingdom. At the time of his election there was really no Pope,¹ the three claimants of the Papal chair having all been in one way or another disposed of. The council of Constance,

¹ John XXIII. was formally deposed by the council of Constance on May 29th, and Gregory XII. resigned on July 4th, 1415. Benedict XIII. was deposed on July 26th, 1417, and Martin V. was elected on Nov. 11th of the same year. Thus the schism in the Papacy came to an end.

which had assembled on the 5th November, 1414, was still sitting, and the Bishop of Norwich, after being consecrated at St. Paul's, on 31st May, 1416, was sent out two months afterwards as one of six English delegates to take part in the election of the new Pope, who was chosen accordingly on the 11th November, 1417, and assumed the name of Martin V. During Bishop WAKERING'S absence, the archbishop of Smyrna acted for him as his suffragan, and he, himself, does not appear to have shown himself to his diocese till the spring of 1418, when he held an ordination in the chapel of the palace at Norwich on the 26th March. How soon he began to exercise severity against the Lollards must remain uncertain, the documents which Foxe refers to, and dresses up in his usual extravagant manner, having perished; but that the bishop showed himself stern and uncompromising to heretics can hardly be doubted, though none were actually put to death for their opinions.

Bishop WAKERING died on the 9th of April, 1425, in the ninth year of his episcopate. Though he built a new chapter-house for the priory, and a cloister from the palace to the cathedral, not one stone of these edifices remains upon another.¹ In the nine years that he was bishop 489 deacons and 504 priests were ordained in the diocese, the larger number by his suffragans; but no instance occurred of any ordination being held in the cathedral. By the legislation of the previous reign a check had been given to the shameful appropriation of church property by

¹ The site of the cloister is given in Harrod's plan "Norf. Arch." vol. vi., p. 27.

the religious houses, and though already attempts had been made to evade the statutes, no further spoliation of country benefices had been effected, I think, in the diocese of Norwich. When Bishop WAKERING, a year before his death, sent into the exchequer a certificate of the number of benefices in his diocese, which had been despoiled for the behalf of "poor nuns and hospitallers" alone, it appeared that they amounted to no less than sixty-five. These were, however, a very small number of the parishes which had been defrauded. How far the evil had gone before the common sense of the nation revolted against it may be inferred from the fact that, of the 914 benefices now comprehended within the East Anglian diocese, 372 are vicarages, *i.e.*, they had been plundered by the monastic bodies.

I find one welcome indication of a liberal and kindly spirit having animated Bishop WAKERING, in that on three occasions he presented *villeins* with their freedom. In his time, too, I meet with the first instance of a sufficient pension being granted to a clergyman on resigning his living, when no longer able, from blindness and old age, to do his duty.¹

When this bishop died, the condition of affairs in England had once more thrown power into the hands of the Pope, which he was not slow to use. The records of our history at this time are very defective, and it is sometimes difficult to trace the current of events. This, however, is certain, that the see of Norwich was vacant for more than a year, though one

¹ Adam Coket, rector of Lopham, who retired in 1424.

JOHN HAFORD—of whom I can discover nothing but his name—was formally *translated* by the Pope from the see of Worcester, in July, 1425. As, however, the same prelate had been translated to Lincoln in February, 1424, and yet was never in possession of that see, or of Worcester either, I infer that he was a candidate for preferment, whom the Council (which was now, in effect, governing the country for the child-king) were strong enough to refuse admitting to any English see. The Pope gave way, after a fashion; he “provided” for the see of Norwich on the 27th February, 1426, appointing WILLIAM ALNEWICK to succeed in the event of a vacancy. JOHN HAFORD, it is to be supposed, went through the form of resignation, and the new bishop, having paid 2,700 golden florins in fees at the papal court, was consecrated at Canterbury, on the 18th of August. He had been a monk of St. Albans, and for a few months was prior of Wymondham. At the time of his promotion he was archdeacon of Salisbury, and had held other preferment.

During the long vacancy the Lollards in East Anglia had a respite from any active persecution, and availed themselves of their opportunity with much persistent activity. During the first year of Bishop ALNEWICK’s episcopate not much was to be done. The Pope had expressed strong displeasure against Archbishop Chichele, whom he believed to be in some way to blame for not bringing about the repeal of the Statute of Provisors; and the quarrel between the Pope and Primate turned the attention of most churchmen from the sectaries; but the feel-

ing in high quarters against the Lollards was increasing in bitterness, and persecution was sure to begin when occasion should serve. There is a curious indication of the abhorrence with which orthodox persons regarded the new doctrines, in the course of an inquiry which was made, in the autumn of 1427, into the misconduct of Isabella Hermyte, prioress of the nunnery of Ridlingfield, in Suffolk, whose shameful doings had given occasion to great scandal in the neighbourhood, and led to formal charges being laid against her. On being brought to trial before the bishop's commissary, the wretched woman confessed her immorality, but one accusation she vehemently denied; peculation, amounting to downright robbery she could not gainsay; adultery was brought too plainly home to her; but the crime of *Lollardy* she repudiated with vehement protests. She was not so bad as that!

It was not until the year after this that the persecution of the Lollards began in earnest. The archbishop issued letters on the 20th of May, for the assembling of a council at St. Paul's Cathedral, to deliberate on the best and most stringent measures for utterly extirpating the new sect, and stamping out the prevalent heresies. The council met on the 5th July, and continued sitting till the 21st. So grievously had the Regulars by this time become dominant over the Seculars, so completely had the parish priests come to be regarded as "the inferior clergy," that, though from the diocese of Norwich no less than eighteen representatives of the religious houses were summoned to attend the council, the parochial clergy were re-

1428

presented by no more than two proctors. The effect of the council was soon felt, and the Lollards were everywhere proceeded against. On the 11th September a diocesan synod was held in the chapel of the bishop's palace at Norwich, to adjudicate upon the case of one William White, a somewhat representative man, as a teacher of the new doctrines. Six years before (1st July, 1422), White had been cited before the convocation at St. Paul's, and had been censured for officiating in the parish church of Tenterden, in Kent, without a sufficient licence from the archbishop, and, further, for preaching and teaching heretical doctrine. He gave way under the pressure that was brought to bear upon him, abjured his peculiar tenets, and was allowed to go, on giving a solemn engagement to preach and teach no more. But his conscience would not allow him to rest, and he soon brought himself under grave suspicion; he had made the diocese of Canterbury too hot to hold him, and he slipped away to Norfolk, where, in the absence of any bishop appointed to the see, he might hope for comparative safety.

In the valley of the Waveney, just on the borders of the two counties, a remarkable religious movement had been going on for some time. The leaders were a small band of unbeneficed clergy, who were what we should now call the curates-in-charge of the parishes where they were living. At least nine of these parish priests were implicated, of whom the most influential were, a certain Hugh Pie, of Loddon (apparently a graduate of one of the universities) who was looked upon as a kind of

apostle, and one Bartholomew, of Earsham, who is spoken of as a monk whose influence in his immediate neighbourhood was paramount. The whole district was in a ferment of religious excitement, and priests and people seemed to be of one mind. White, driven out of Kent, found safety and welcome here. Settling at Gillingham, a village on the Norfolk side of the Waveney, and scarcely a mile from the town of Beccles, which was the stronghold of the movement, he soon found warm friends and supporters. He cast off the clerical habit, allowed his hair to grow on the tonsure, and fearlessly took to himself a wife, to whom he was married, probably, by one of the priests who sympathised with him. He had been enjoying his security for about two years, when the storm burst upon him, and when the council met, in July, 1428, he was cited to appear, and answer for his relapse. Of course, he disregarded the citation, and was excommunicated for his contumacy, but his fate was sealed. The council adjourned on the 21st July, and Bishop ALNEWICK, who had taken part in it, returned to his own diocese. On the 13th September a provincial synod was held in the chapel of the palace at Norwich, and White was brought up for judgment, *in chains*. His condemnation followed, as a matter of course, and he was sentenced to be burned as a relapsed heretic, who had preached in the diocese of Norwich the errors which six years before he had renounced and abjured. The poor man appears to have shown some firmness and courage at the last; but the horror inspired by his fate, which was then an almost unheard of novelty,

struck terror into the minds of his followers, and during the next three years, as the persecution went on, at least one hundred and twenty of the Norfolk and Suffolk Lollards abjured, and, though no more were brought to the stake, almost all were more or less *troubled* by the relentless bishop, and the Regulars, who were his great supporters. Some of these poor people were compelled to give up their English translation of the New Testament, some were condemned to do public penance in various ways ; some were sentenced to terms of imprisonment, one of them for life, in the monastery of Langley. If not convinced, they were, at any rate, silenced, and for a hundred years we hear of heresy in the diocese of Norwich no more. For once, persecution was effectual ; the time for toleration of error, much less for freedom of opinion, had not yet arrived.

Bishop ALNEWICK had been just ten years bishop of Norwich when Pope Eugenius IV. translated him to the see of Lincoln, and appointed in his room THOMAS BROWN, who himself had a year ago been consecrated bishop of Rochester. The death of the great duke of Bedford just twelve months before had already made itself felt as a calamity to England. The king, not yet fifteen years of age, was still in the hands of his council, who were too much divided in their interests to watch very jealously over the royal prerogative, and the pope's nominee was accepted with hardly a protest. His episcopate was uneventful, except for a quarrel with the citizens of Norwich, and another dispute with the prior of the monastery. He seems to have passed the greater part of his time in

his diocese, and he was the first bishop of whom it is recorded, in the archives of the see, that he held an ordination in the cathedral. This was when, on the 12th April, 1438, he personally ordained seventeen deacons and nine priests.¹ His favourite residence was at Hoxne—perhaps from its central situation—and it was here that he died on the 6th December, 1445.² The next half of that dreary fifteenth century passed in the diocese of Norwich with a dull monotony, and there is nothing to record that is worth our while to dwell upon.

At Bishop BROWN's death it is said that Henry VI. wished to promote his own confessor, JOHN STANBERY, a Carmelite friar, to succeed; but the earl of Suffolk, who was then at the zenith of his power, and had recently received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for his part in negotiating a peace with France, and bringing about the marriage of the young king, brushed the Carmelite aside, and managed to get WALTER LYHART appointed in his stead. He was a native of Cornwall, a distinguished Oxford graduate, a doctor of divinity, and provost of Oriel College. He had held many preferments, and besides being

¹ The whole number ordained during his episcopate was 495 deacons and 476 priests. The larger number of these were ordained by suffragans.

² The bishops of Norwich seem to have placed the palace at Norwich at the disposal of their suffragans for at least the first seventy years of the fifteenth century. How much earlier and how much later they may have done so I am not in a position to say. After Bishop Salmon's time the palace was always too large for the Bishops of the See. Cf. Harrod, "Norf. Arch.," vi., 33.

chaplain to the earl of Suffolk, was confessor to Queen Margaret. He was consecrated at Lambeth on the 26th February, 1446, and enthroned in the cathedral at Norwich on the 3rd April following. Contemporary with the luckless Bishop Pecock, who himself was a fellow of Oriel, he appears to have befriended that versatile but erratic man of genius as long as it was possible, as indeed his predecessor Bishop ALNEWICK did, after he had been translated to Lincoln, and LYHART was one of those to whom Pecock sent a copy of his famous sermon at St. Paul's cross in 1447. It is said, indeed, that Pecock owed his promotion to the see of Chichester to the influence of LYHART; but as time went on it was no longer possible for him to support his early friend. When his old patron, the earl of Suffolk, was recommended by Henry VI. to leave England for five years, till the furious storm of unpopularity, which his enemies had raised against him, should peradventure subside, LYHART was one of those who entered a protest against the judgment. How vain that protest was is well known.

During the whole of Bishop LYHART's time the condition of Norfolk, socially and morally, was all that it should not have been: if the clergy were not better than the laity, they could not possibly have been worse. The Paston letters reveal a state of anarchy and violence which would have been absolutely incredible, but for the unimpeachable evidence of those wonderful documents. Yet, in the midst of all this grossness and violence and corruption, the bishop was trying to keep up discipline among his

clergy, visiting his diocese, and carrying on very extensive architectural improvements in the cathedral. A disastrous fire had occurred in the church in March, 1463, which, it is presumed, destroyed the roof; for the bishop set himself to cover the nave with the splendid stone vaulting which remains as the glorious monument of his munificence. The changes effected in the appearance of the vast pile during the fifteenth century were very considerable. Bishop ALNEWICK began them by building the great west door, and doing away with the narrower and meaner Norman entrance, and by providing, in his will, for the construction of the huge west window, which, whatever its defects may be, certainly served to dispel the gloom which must have characterised Bishop HERBERT'S long nave. Bishop LYHART'S vaulted roof followed, and his successor in the see completed the vaulting of the choir. It is said that the stone roofs of the transepts were completed by the last bishop of Norwich who held the ancient barony and revenues of the see. Bishop LYHART died on the 24th May, 1472. His will has been preserved, and proves him to have been to the last the same munificent prelate he was during life,—a friend and patron of scholars and learned men, lavish in his benefactions, and showing his love for Oxford, where he had been bred, and for Cambridge, too, which had claims upon his regard.

His successor was JAMES GOLDWELL, another Oxford man, educated at All Souls' College, but subsequently president of St. George's Hall in the same university. He became dean of Salisbury in

1463. He had been sent on an embassy to Pope Sixtus V. about the time of Bishop LYHART's death, and was consecrated at Rome on the 4th October, 1472. Though he held his bishopric for more than twenty-six years, there are few bishops of the see of whose administration, or of whose personal history, so little is known. He died on the 5th February, 1499, and was succeeded by THOMAS JANE, archdeacon of Essex and canon of Windsor, who was consecrated in the following October, and died eleven months after. He paid the pope no less than 7,300 golden florins in fees on his appointment. Of him and his doings in the diocese there is nothing to tell.

There is no chapter in English history so melancholy as that which deals with the period embraced between the death of Henry V. and the battle of Bosworth. No sixty years of our annals contain such hideous records of ferocity and turbulence, of private warfare and violence, of vindictive murders and enormous lying. If there was not absolute anarchy in the time of Henry VI. it was only because the various orders clung together with a certain professional *esprit de corps*. Every man was, in some sense, a member of a faction, and looked to his faction for such protection and support as it could afford. It looks as if during those miserable sixty years politicians, lawyers, and churchmen were trying the grotesque experiment of doing without one another. And yet in the midst of all the turmoil and bloodshed and sorrow, literature and learning were being cultivated with no little enthusiasm, and art was by

no means dead. Whatever may have been the case in other dioceses, it is certain that the bishops of Norwich during the fifteenth century were resident in their see, and that they were prominent personages as scholars and men of culture and learning. But the only course open to them was one of "masterly inaction": all that could be hoped for was to keep things going and to hold themselves aloof from the fierce brawls of rival parties, between whom they might now and then arbitrate when both sides were exhausted by their fury. It is clear that the East Anglian bishops were men of peace, and that their influence was not inconsiderable in encouraging literary tastes and studious habits among their clergy. Pitts, in his list of distinguished Englishmen of letters who flourished during the latter half of the fifteenth century, mentions no less than twenty-four Norfolk men who were recognised as prominent scholars, controversialists, historians, or students of science. Their names, for the most part, have gone down into silence; but Lydgate, the monk of Bury, will not soon be forgotten; and Walsingham, the historian, is still read; and John Skelton, rector of Diss, in Norfolk, has found a laborious editor of his voluminous works in our own time. The printing-press had begun its mighty revolution, and one of the earliest specimens of Pynson's art was an edition of the works of John Tonney, an Augustinian friar at Norwich, who was renowned for his devotion to Greek literature at a time when the language of Hellas was known to very few. The wills of East Anglian clergy during this time make frequent mention of their books, and

the constant occurrence of the names of the country parsons as feoffees in the settlements of the estates of the landed gentry goes far to prove that they were respected and trusted by their people.

On the whole, the impression left upon me by the examination of all the evidence that has come to hand is that the condition of the diocese of Norwich in the fifteenth century reflects credit upon the bishops of the see and the clergy over whom they ruled.

The episcopate of Bishop NIX marks an epoch in our history. The long period of intestine warfare had come to an end. The nation had begun to profit by its repose ; the spirit of inquiry had been aroused in all classes ; a wave of religious fervour had begun to roll over Europe, but no longer to be kept within the old banks. Intellectual life was to be noted everywhere ; the printer and the schoolmaster were abroad. The new bishop of Norwich was by no means the man to lead the onward movement, which it needed no great sagacity to perceive would run its course ; he was emphatically a man who had everything to gain by clinging not so much to what was good in the past as to the good things which the past had to offer him. He is the only bishop of Norwich on whose character even calumny has cast a slur, and we would fain hope that the bitterness and indignation which his cruelty and vindictiveness were calculated to arouse may have tempted some who abhorred those vices to invent charges of another kind which have never been supported by the shadow of evidence, or, indeed, ever been put for-

ward in a form which would admit their being refuted.

RICHARD NIX was a Somersetshire man, and a scholar of no mean pretention. He had graduated at Oxford, had thence passed over to Bavaria, where he had diligently studied law, and, as early as 1473, he had been admitted to holy orders, and was benefited in the diocese of Sarum.

Preferment came upon him thick and fast. In 1497 he was promoted to a stall at Windsor, where one of his fellow-canons was THOMAS JANE, his immediate predecessor in the bishopric.

He was consecrated on the 18th April, 1501, and at once went down to his diocese.

We hear very little about him or his doings for some years ; but it is evident that, in spite of all that had been done to keep down the sectaries, the fire was smouldering, and the bringers-in of new things and the declaimers against the established order were bestirring themselves in secret with much earnestness and activity. We must accept with exceeding caution the statements of John Foxe, when he tells us that Thomas Norrice was *burnt* on the 31st March, 1507 ; that Thomas Ayers, a priest of Norwich, was *burnt* at Eccles in 1510 ; and Thomas Binge *burnt* at Norwich in 1511. At the most, this burning can have been no more than *branding*, but it is quite clear that the bishop, thus early in his career, was making himself conspicuous by his hatred and severity against the innovators, lay or clerical, and was determined to spare none.

It was about ten years after this first display of

intolerance that a little band of Norfolk men in the university of Cambridge were becoming suspected for their dangerous opinions and their audacity in maintaining them. These were Thomas Arthur, fellow of St. John's; Thomas Bilney, fellow of Trinity Hall; John Lambert, fellow of Queen's; and Robert Barnes, prior of the Augustinian friars. It must have been while they were still young at their studies that Tyndal, who was their senior by many years, removed from Oxford and settled at Cambridge, where he became famous for his knowledge of Greek and for something else besides. Tyndal's influence upon young men was that of a fervid enthusiast with wide sympathies and deep earnestness. We shall never know how widely it extended, for over this part of his life much obscurity rests; but it is certain that John Frith, of King's College, was one of his converts, and almost as certain that the little clique of Norfolk graduates were his disciples. The most passionately zealous of them all was Bilney, who, gifted with great fluency, gave himself up to preaching, first in the diocese of Ely and then in that of Norwich.

About 1525 it seems that some serious steps were taken to break up this little society. Frith removed to Oxford. Tyndal himself, the year before, had found it necessary to leave England and take up his residence on the Continent, where Lambert soon joined him and became chaplain to the English factory at Antwerp. Barnes, for a sermon preached on Christmas Eve, was thrown into prison, escaped, and took refuge in Germany, where he became intimate

with most of the leading German reformers. Only Bilney and Arthur remained. Yes, there was one more, though he was in no way connected with Norfolk,—this was Hugh Latimer, then cross-bearer of the university of Cambridge, who in after years declared that he had been one of Bilney's converts, and who, at the time, was intimately associated with him in more ways than one. Latimer was still in residence at Cambridge, though deeply suspected, and not likely to escape the persecutors much longer.¹

Bilney and Arthur had sought a refuge nearer home. Bilney appears to have lived for some time as an itinerant preacher in the diocese of Norwich,² everywhere creating a great sensation by reason of his pugnacious aggressiveness, provoking violent opposition from those who were not prepared for the new doctrine. It was quite evident that the two Norfolk reformers would not long be tolerated: and accordingly on the 27th November, 1527, they were brought before Cardinal Wolsey and a large assemblage of bishops, lawyers, and divines, on a charge of heresy. On the 2nd December, Arthur recanted, and was ordered to do penance, and seems to have been confined at Walsingham, where he died obscurely in 1532. Bilney, too, recanted, and was kept in prison

¹ His submission made before Convocation, 20th March, 1532, may be read in Wilkins, iii., 747.

² One valuable instance of the effect produced by Bilney may be found in the remarkable recantation extorted from Anthony Yaxley, Esq., of Rickenhall, Suffolk, before the bishop, at Hoxne, on the 27th of January, 1525, which is printed in the "Eastern Counties Collectanea," p. 42.

for a year, but was eventually released, and returned to Cambridge. A deep anguish of remorse took possession of him, and, after being haunted by profound melancholy for a year and a half, he could bear it no longer; he turned his back upon Cambridge for ever, and returned to the old life, though he knew that he was a doomed man. On the 3rd March, 1531, he was apprehended in London, and sent down to Norwich, where, being cited before Dr. Pellys, Bishop Nix's chancellor, he was degraded from his orders, and condemned to death as a relapsed and obstinate heretic. On the 19th August he was burned at Norwich, more than atoning for his earlier weakness by the grand courage with which he met his end. Two years after this Bishop Nix himself got into trouble. He was very old, and blind, but he had amassed, it was said, enormous wealth, and on some frivolous pretence he was pronounced to have incurred the penalties of a *præmunire*, and adjudged to pay a fine of £10,000. It is impossible to discover the ground of the charge, or indeed, in the conflict of statements that have been made regarding it, to be quite certain how the affair ended. He received a pardon from the king, but it was a very costly pardon, and evidently greatly crippled the old man's resources. Shortly after this, Cranmer, who was now Primate, instituted a visitation of the see of Norwich, by his commissary, in spite of the bishop's protest, and a fresh quarrel ensued; once more Bishop Nix was subjected to humiliation. He survived this last vexation just two years, long enough to hear, for he saw it not with his eyes, that Coverdale's translation of

the Bible had been published under royal patronage, and this, though he himself had spent his life in suppressing heretical books, had assisted Bishop Tunstal in buying up the first issue of Tyndal's New Testament, hoping thereby to stop its dissemination, and had been the most diligent worrier of the secret hawkers of Protestant literature, which was, however, greedily bought up in his diocese.

He died on the 14th January, 1536, and was buried in his own cathedral.

Three months before his death the first visitation of the monasteries began ; three months after it the Act for the dissolution of the smaller monasteries had passed.

The diocese of Norwich was no longer in communion with the see of Rome.

CHAPTER X.

CHAOS COME AGAIN.

ON the 15th of January, 1532, an Act was passed in Parliament whereby the payment of annates, *i.e.*, a year's income exacted from every clerical person on his preferment to a benefice, was forbidden to be paid any longer to the Pope as heretofore.

This Act was the first serious threat on the part of King Henry VIII. that the rupture with the see of Rome was imminent. It was not ratified until the following July; but inasmuch as the king had no wish to save the clergy from an impost from which an important revenue might be derived, it was further enacted on the 3rd November, 1534, that all those payments should in future be paid to the king and his heirs. Up to this time the clergy were rated upon the basis of Pope Nicholas's taxation [see p. 91], but during the three centuries that had elapsed since that document had been drawn up, fresh endowments had been bestowed upon the religious orders and secular canons, and many rich foundations had sprung up exempt from those ecclesiastical burdens which the older endowments were required to bear. On the 30th January, 1535, a commission was issued by the king for drawing up a complete return of all the ecclesiastical, monastic, and colle-

giate property in England and Wales. The return was to give the gross and the net income of every benefice, as well as of every abbey, priory, college, or chantry, and the commissioners were ordered to have their reports ready by the following June. These returns constitute that remarkable work known as the "*Valor Ecclesiasticus*," which gives, as far as it goes, an exhaustive account of the revenues of the Church of England and of the religious orders when the papal supremacy came to an end. It seems that, as a rule, the work of the commissioners was done within the time appointed, but the returns for a portion of the diocese of Norwich were not completed till the 5th October. A month before this date the fall of the monasteries had been determined on. Cromwell, the king's vicar-general, had, towards the end of September, sent forth a small army of common informers, armed with letters under the king's hand and signet, to report upon the condition of every religious house in the country, and to make out as bad a case as could be made; the very names of these creatures have passed away, only about a dozen of them have been recovered; history, as if in very shame, has refused to make mention of the rest.

The reports sent in by these men have almost all perished, but among the few that have survived is one which professes to tell of the condition of the Norfolk monasteries. It is a paper which bears upon its every line the marks not only of falsehood, but of revolting grossness, on the part of those who could write it, and it is not conceivable that it could have been accepted as anything but a hideous invention

by those to whom it was handed in. It deals with twenty-one religious houses in the county, and is valuable as showing the character of the wretches whom Cromwell had in his pay, and whom he had no scruple in employing to serve his own ends. This report seems never to have been made any use of; it was evidently considered unsafe to take the next step on testimony so entirely worthless as that which these first visitors offered.

Cromwell waited six months longer, and in April, 1536, the Act of Parliament was passed for suppressing all those monasteries whose income did not amount to £200; another commission was issued for carrying into effect the provisions of the Act and to despoil the smaller houses of all their property, whether lands, houses, or goods, handing it all over to the king to be dealt with according to his royal pleasure. The *Commissioners* appointed for the county of Norfolk were gentlemen of position and character, and here we are fortunate in possessing their report *in extenso*. It gives us the details of twenty-four religious houses, including five nunneries; it enters minutely into matters of finance, and in all cases pronounces upon the character borne by the members of the several houses.

The aggregate income of these smaller Norfolk houses is set down at £1,238. 5s. 4½d. The number of *Religious* of both sexes was seventy-five. The value of the lead, bells, vestments, and stock was £2,454. 9s. 2d. There can be no doubt that some of the monasteries had taken the alarm before the blow fell, and had made the most of their short time

of respite. In five of these smaller houses, which in 1534 had contained forty inmates, there were only sixteen when the Commissioners appeared; and in one house—the Trinitarian priory of Ingham—the prior and six canons had sold their whole establishment,—lead, goods, cattle, and furniture,—and had dispersed none knew whither. The Commissioners report favourably of the moral condition and character of nineteen of these houses; of four, and these the smallest, they say that the monks were of “slender” or of “slandrous name.” All the nunneries except one are very highly spoken of; the exception was the Cistercian nunnery at Marham, where a vicious abbess had let everything go to ruin, and had made her four sisters as bad as herself; the house, we are told, was “in sore decay.” Of one house—that of the Augustinian canons of Pentney—the Commissioners cannot speak too highly; they were evidently the objects of love and reverence to all their neighbours.

Before winter was over all these smaller houses had been dismantled and their inhabitants sent adrift; the first step in spoliation had been taken, but not the last. In four years from the time that the first commission was issued, in April, 1536, not a monastery was left in England, great or small.¹

On the 6th April, 1539, Bishop Herbert's great monastery at Norwich was dissolved, just four hundred and twenty years after the founder's death; and, by a sweep of the pen, the monks were changed into

¹ One of the last to fall was the Cluniac Priory of Thetford, which was suppressed on the 16th of February, 1540.

prebendaries or secular canons, and the last prior, William Castleton, became the first dean of the cathedral church. Fifteen months after this, on the 28th July, 1540, Cromwell, whose work of destruction was done and for whom his master had no further need, suffered on the scaffold, almost with his dying breath shrieking for mercy and finding just as much and no more as he himself had ever shown.¹ The suppression of the monasteries was not carried out in East Anglia without deep discontent and at least one futile attempt at a rebellion. The inhabitants of Walsingham, who lived on the pilgrims constantly visiting the famous shrine, found themselves suddenly reduced to beggary; want made them mutinous, but at the same time rendered them powerless: the riot was soon put down. The story of all the misery, the amazement, perplexity, and despair which the suppression of the religious houses caused throughout the diocese of Norwich during those terrible four years has never been attempted and it may be doubted whether it could be told.

I estimate the number of the "religious" of both sexes in the diocese of Norwich when the suppression was first thought of at a little short of three hundred. This does not include the friars nor those seculars who were members of collegiate bodies, and whose

¹ By his attainder all the lands which he had held on the last day of March, 1539, were forfeited to the Crown. The manor, palace, park, rectory, and advowson of the vicarage of North Elmham (part of the estate of the bishopric of Norwich), was saved to his descendants by a fortunate deed of feoffment executed in 1538.

time had not yet come. For arriving at the numbers of the friars we have no sufficient data, but taking into account the number of their houses in the large towns of East Anglia, we can hardly estimate them at less than that of all the other orders.

When we try to calculate the value of the endowments of our Eastern monasteries we are face to face with a very difficult problem. The comparative value of money at various periods of our history seems to be indeterminable. At any rate, those who have dogmatised most upon the question have confused it most hopelessly. This, however, we do know, that taking the twenty-five livings in the diocese, whose *gross* income is now set down at upwards of £1,000 a year; we find that their aggregate income as returned in the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of 1534 makes up a grand total of £289. 4s. 7d., which was barely nine-tenths of the annual income of the priory of Castleacre, less than half that of the Abbey of St. Benet's Hulm, less than a third of the income of Bishop Losinga's foundation at Norwich, and only a little more than a sixth of the revenue of the mighty Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds. Without entering into calculations which our space forbids us from laying before the reader, it may safely be said that at the time of the dissolution the value of the *real* property held by the regulars in Norwich diocese (exclusive of their houses and goods) cannot be estimated at less than three times that of all the beneficed clergy put together.

Bishop NIX, as has been said, died 14th January, 1536. The king held his hand before appointing a

successor, nay ! he did more : on the 19th March two suffragan bishops were consecrated at Canterbury, Thomas Manning, prior of Butley, was nominated bishop of Ipswich ; John Salisbury, prior of Horsham St. Faiths, became titular bishop of Thetford. It looks as if it had been determined to abolish the bishopric of Norwich altogether. In effect, the see was stripped absolutely bare before any fresh appointment was made, and by an Act of Parliament which had been passed in February the ancient revenues were actually confiscated and the possessions of the priory of Hickling and the barony and revenues of the mitred abbey of St. Benet's Hulm were bestowed as a new endowment upon the plundered see. The Abbey of Hulm is the single religious house in the kingdom which has to this day never been dissolved. Its abbot at this time was one WILLIAM RUGG, a base and truculent time-server, prepared to lend himself to any measure, however infamous, which the king and his creatures might order to be carried out. He was consecrated bishop of the see on the 28th June, and from the day of his appointment he set himself to make all he could of whatever was saleable, even to the extent of trying to alienate the very palace at Norwich. Men murmured and blushed, but it was all in vain,—the frown of the king meant death, and none dared raise his voice.

King Henry died at last on the 28th of January, 1547. Two years afterwards Bishop RUGG was induced to resign, he could be borne with no longer. During the remaining years of the reign of Edward VI. THOMAS THIRLBY, the first and last bishop of

Westminster, to which he was consecrated in 1540, presided over the see of Norwich : a graceful, courtly prelate, who like many another had given up all for lost, and in view of the Gordian knots which earnest men were trying desperately to unravel he showed himself

Unskill'd to sunder and too weak to cleave.

The terrible oligarchy under Edward VI. followed closely on the lines laid down by Henry VIII. There still remained twenty-two colleges of *secular* canons in the diocese and seventy-four hospitals and lazar houses with no inconsiderable endowments, and there were 138 chantries or what may be called chapels of ease, which remained to pillage. Pillaged they were ruthlessly.¹

There were nine hundred guilds, one or more in every parish, with funds that really belonged to the poorest people, and which were kept up, in great measure, by the constant stream of small benefactions contributed by the prosperous and wealthy. They were all dissolved, the frightened artisans and labourers being compelled not only to surrender their money, but even the very drinking-bowls and the trumpery furniture which were the pride of these benefit clubs and which their humble forefathers had left for the use of those who should come after. At last the churches in towns and villages were plundered of everything they contained to the bare walls, and when

¹ Among the richest of all the colleges in England was the college of Stoke, in Suffolk, whose last dean was Matthew Parker, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

it had come to this the boy king died, and his sister succeeded to the throne on the 6th July, 1553.

For six years a wild scramble had been going on, and in the East Anglian diocese there had been almost complete anarchy. The diocesan registers are full of such entries as had never been made before, and which record how one advowson after another was bought and sold. Well might the clergy in convocation lift up their voices, though in vain, against the Simoniacs.¹

Events had followed one another so rapidly, the changes—ordained by law, or proclamation—in doctrine and ritual, had been so violent, that no one knew what he might not be called upon to believe or subscribe to from day to day, and side by side with the fiercest intolerance the utmost licence of opinion prevailed.

The first sign of a clergyman joining the reforming party was that he took to himself a wife. Bishop RUGG tried vainly to hunt down the married priests ; Bishop THIRLBY let them alone. But no sooner was Queen Mary firmly seated on the throne than the bishop of Norwich was compelled to bestir himself. It was Wyatt's rebellion that first aroused in Queen Mary the ferocity she had inherited from her father. At the beginning of March, 1554,—while London was reeking like the shambles with the dangling corpses of the victims of that mad outbreak, and the queen was watching in a fever of excitement for her Spanish bridegroom,—articles werè sent down to

¹ Wilkins, vol. iii., p. 860.

the bishop of Norwich to look to the state of his diocese and to tighten the reins of discipline. It was known that East Anglia swarmed with married clergy; the time had come when they must be dispossessed of their cures, and dispossessed they were.

Bishop THIRLBY was translated to the see of Ely in September, 1554, and his successor was JOHN HOPTON, Queen Mary's Confessor, who in old days had been prior of the Dominican Friars at Oxford.

In the year ending 1st April, 1555, no fewer than 371 institutions are registered, of which only 43 were occasioned by the death of the previous incumbents; 168 are expressly said to have been caused by deprivation; 28 incumbents resigned; in 130 instances the cause of the vacancy is not stated; in upwards of 200 cases a pension is assigned to the ejected parson, though the amount is in no case specified. So complete a transformation of the diocese had been known only once before, when the Black Death swept over the land.

The deplorable confusion of the last fifteen years had made the people sick of all the changes, and when the Mass was restored in the churches it was welcomed by the multitude with enthusiasm. Speedily, however, the tide of opinion turned again; the ejected married priests were to a man pledged to do battle for the new learning. Driven out of house and home, they were not likely to love the doctrines of those who supplanted them, and when the new bishop and his far more savage and merciless chan-

¹ The articles may be seen *in extenso* in Heylin's "Hist. Reform.," p. 105.

cellor proceeded to burn poor men and women at the stake for heresy, and up and down the diocese persecution raged horribly, the *Gospellers* increased in number and earnestness, as a matter of course, till when Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole died on the same day (17th November, 1558) it was time for her former confessor to turn his face to the wall.¹ Bishop HOPTON survived his royal mistress scarcely six months. For four miserable years he was bishop of Norwich : to him as to others they were years of bitterness and disappointment, years spent in the vain endeavour to turn back the great current of progress.

On the 29th June, 1559, the dean and chapter of Norwich elected RICHARD COX to the vacant bishopric ; he was, however, sent to Ely, and JOHN PARKHURST was appointed to Norwich, and was consecrated by Archbishop Parker, 1st September, 1560.

Bishop PARKHURST was one of those characters in whom the good and the bad lie very close side by side. A Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, he had been a popular and amusing person, very much given to writing epigrams not always characterised by strict regard to propriety of expression, insomuch that in his later life he was not spared by the critics, who censured him for republishing his "Juvenilia." While at Oxford he had Jewel as his pupil, and the loyal affection of the younger man to his tutor continued

¹ Twenty bishops were consecrated during Mary's short reign. Eight of them died before its close ; seven of the eight within six months of the queen.

through life. Ordained in 1532, he was presented to the living of Bishop Cleeve, in Gloucestershire, and very soon after coming into residence he married Margaret, daughter of Thomas Garnish, of Kenton, Suffolk, and so became allied to one of the leading families in that county. He seems to have had no children. On the accession of Queen Mary, he fled to Switzerland, whither his wife followed him, and I am inclined to think she must have died before the turn of his fortunes came, for we hear of her no more.

The condition of his diocese when he came to it was deplorable beyond description. The bishop was clearly a man of expensive habits, and not too high-minded. Money he must have, and while the hideous venality of the times needed to be resisted and rebuked by a prelate at once frugal and austere, Bishop PARKHURST showed a bad example in making merchandise of the Church of God. A vile system had grown up whereby lay patrons not only sold their patronage openly, but as openly exacted from the incumbents an annual pension from the benefice, which was a first charge upon the income, and in many instances the bargain was a ruinous one to the wretched parson. The result was, that in 1562 more than half the parish churches in the diocese were found to be vacant, and everywhere a serious decline in the number of candidates for holy orders was observable. Then came the large immigration of foreigners into Norwich, driven out by Alva's persecution in the Low Countries, and all those disorders and irregularities which ensued as at once the cause

and the consequence of the decay of all sound discipline. The sectaries were loud and aggressive, the bishop never interfering with them unless when compelled. Archbishop Parker tried hard to bring things to a better state, but found himself thwarted and all but powerless.

It was in Bishop Parkhurst's time that those *prophesyings* began in the diocese of Norwich which were the occasion of much unseemly altercation among the clergy, who were hardly yet ready for open discussion upon the interpretation of Holy Scripture and for the exercise of their gifts of extempore prayer. The disorders got to such a height that the *prophesyings* were put down; repression being the order of the day. Yet pent-up passion broke forth in one direction when it was restrained in another, and the canons of the cathedral showed an evil example;—now by their negligence and non-residence; now by their outrageous riot in 1570, when, with the exception of the dean, who was absent, and Dr. Gardiner, who prudently kept out of the way, the whole chapter, down to the lay clerks, behaved like an infuriated mob.

It was a dark age for the diocese, though worse days were coming. Bishop Parkhurst died on the 2nd February, 1575, in the fourteenth year of his episcopate,—an episcopate during which clergy and laity were left to do almost as they pleased, while the bishop kept open house in a lavish way sometimes at the palace of Norwich, and, latterly, at his house at Ludham,—a genial, scholarly, pliant, hospitable gentleman, but little more.

EDMUND FREAKE who succeeded Bishop PARKHURST had been an Augustinian canon in the abbey of Waltham in King Henry's days, and was pensioned off when that monastery was dissolved. After receiving many lesser preferments, he was consecrated to the see of Rochester in 1572, and thence was translated to Norwich in November, 1575. When in 1579 the queen, Elizabeth, and her ministers had formed a design for plundering the see of Ely, overtures were made to Bishop FREAKE to assist in the iniquitous attempt. He firmly refused, and continued for five years longer where he was ; but in 1584 he was transferred to Worcester, and EDMUND SCAMBLER was removed from the see of Peterborough to Norwich. Notorious as a shameless spoiler in a generation of shameless spoilers, his name is chiefly remembered for his outrageous pillage of the bishopric of Peterborough and for his impudent complaint of the wrongs done to himself through the greed of his predecessor, Bishop FREAKE. He was bishop ten years, and was followed by WILLIAM REDMAN, archdeacon of Canterbury, whose episcopate lasted till September, 1602, when he was succeeded by JOHN JEGON, who had been promoted to the deanery the year before : he was consecrated on the 20th February, 1603,—the last of those Elizabethan prelates whom it is impossible to think of with veneration. The truth is, no one of them was strong enough to rise superior to the spirit of his time. The mastery of the queen over church and state, and the energy of her ministers, on whose extraordinary ability and unscrupulous loyalty she could rely, made her

supremacy in ecclesiastical matters hardly less real or less galling than that of her father. The ecclesiastics of her time, and especially during the latter half of her reign, truckled and obeyed.

It was scarcely to be wondered at. The see of Durham was kept vacant for two years ; Salisbury for three ; Chichester for four ; Bath and Wells for five ; Bristol and Gloucester each for six ; Ely for eighteen ; and, worst of all, Oxford for three periods of nine, twenty-one, and eleven years. The prelates felt that they were bishops during the Queen's pleasure, and that their strength was to sit still. Bishop FRAKE drew up a scheme which, if it had ever taken effect, would have divided up the diocese of Norwich into a number of districts wherein the rural deans would have been able to exercise great moral influence, and, by co-operation and communication with the bishop, great power for good also ; but the scheme remained a dead letter. Independent action on the part of the prelacy, indeed all such action as might tend to strengthen their hands, was paralysed. Meanwhile, the insolence and furious language of the sectaries knew no bounds. When the persecution of Alva had driven thousands of the weavers from the Low Countries to take refuge in Norwich, where they were most generously received and harboured, and places of worship were assigned them where they might use their own ritual, disorder increased still more. If foreigners might do as they pleased, why not Englishmen ? Soon, too, the Brownists spread, their eccentric leader settling in Norfolk for a while and finding favour. Moreover, East Anglia was the

stronghold of the Family of Love, and David George's mystic writings were handed about and translated from their native Dutch into the vernacular, their unintelligible jargon constituting their charm.

When, in 1570, the queen was formally excommunicated by the Pope, new troubles began. Up to that time it can hardly be said that there was any organised Romish party in East Anglia: the excommunication created it. The penal laws that were passed against the *Recusants*, *i.e.*, those who refused to attend the parish churches, forced the conscientious Romanists to declare themselves, and from this time till the close of the century there was neither peace nor security for life or substance to those who showed any reluctance to conform.

How the gentry suffered and were persecuted I have told elsewhere. Whether or not it could have been avoided, taking into account all the circumstances of the time, this is not the place to decide.

This only is certain, that during those forty-five years of Queen Elizabeth's reign, East Anglia passed through such a period of turbulence, bitterness of feeling, and decay of Christian charity,—such a period of neglect of the decencies of religion and of the houses of God in the land, as the diocese had never known since the days when private warfare was the rule and there was no king in Israel,—a period such as we may well pray the Church's divine Head to avert from us for the time to come, even though the promise stand, "I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

And yet one reflection is forced upon the thoughtful

student more and more as his knowledge of the Elizabethan age in the diocese of Norwich grows deeper and wider, and it is this :—

The Master's promise has been found true in the darkest hour. Nay, it is in the darkest hour that its truth has been most surely manifest. We have lived through pillage and persecution, indifference and neglect; we have lived through days when all seemed going, and well nigh gone: yet, from the desolation and the ruin, the Church has risen again and again to new life and activity. Shall we tremble for the future when we can point to the history of the past?

* * * * *

JOHN JEGON was consecrated at Lambeth on the 20th February, 1603. A month after his consecration Queen Elizabeth died and James VI., king of Scotland, became James I., king of England. Under the able administration of Archbishop Whitgift, to whom the Church of England owes a far greater debt than has generally been acknowledged, much had been done to reform abuses and to restore discipline; to the end he was labouring cautiously and wisely, but he had a very hard game to play, and during the last year of his primacy, which was the first year of King James, he needed all his prudence and sagacity in face of the new difficulties that the accession of the king of Scotland had introduced.

Our space forbids us from dwelling upon these, but the diocese of Norwich affords some valuable illustrations of the condition of ecclesiastical affairs during the first quarter of the seventeenth century,

which may be accepted as fairly typical of what was going on generally in the country.

At the time of Bishop JEGON's receiving the appointment to the bishopric he was dean of Norwich. One of the first appointments which the king made was that of George Montgomery to the vacant deanery. Dr. Montgomery was a Scotchman and brother of Viscount Montgomery, in the peerage of Scotland. Dr. Montgomery was duly installed 7th June, 1603; but as it was shrewdly suspected that his preferment would not end at this point, Dr. Edmund Suckling, one of the prebends of the cathedral, obtained for himself, on the 27th April, 1604, a grant of the reversion of the deanery at the next avoidance. Next year Dean Montgomery was promoted to *three bishoprics* in Ireland,¹ and forthwith took up his residence in that country—though still retaining his deanery,—and rarely, if ever, showed himself in Norwich, except upon audit days to receive his dividends. This went on for ten years, until at last he,—having in the meantime resigned Derry and Raphoe, and taken to himself the bishopric of Meath in their stead,—was induced to resign his deanery of Norwich on being *indemnified* for his loss of income. Meanwhile Bishop JEGON had made his brother Thomas, who was master of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, archdeacon of Norwich in September, 1604, and six months afterwards had managed to get for him the second stall in the cathedral, having induced its previous occupant to

¹ Derry, Raphoe, and Clogher.

resign. The first stall was held by Dr. Lawrence Staunton, who had been made dean of Lincoln in 1601, and held his Norwich canonry *in commendam* till his death in 1613. Dr. Suckling seems actually to have been the only member of the chapter who even pretended to reside, and the cathedral close was a vast heap of ruins. As early as 1535 Bishop Nix had granted to the Corporation a lease for eighty-nine years of the great hall, buttery, pantry, and kitchen belonging to the palace at Norwich. The Lady Chapel “with the walls and all other appurtenances,” had been demised for a period of sixty-three years at a rent of 2s. to Dean Salisbury and his wife in 1569. In 1570, the Chapter House had already become “a parcel of void ground late builded on.” The old library of the monastery had been taken down in 1574. In 1614, there were alehouses, which were felt to be not only a scandal but a nuisance, almost abutting on the cathedral walls. At the archdeacon’s visitation in 1609, it appeared that six churches in Norwich were not even furnished with a surplice, two had no cup for the communion, one had no linen cloth for the table; and yet side by side with this slovenliness, the churches of St. Peters Mancroft and St. Giles were admirably provided with *ornaments*, and the former church seems to have been decorated at certain seasons at the expense of the parishioners.

In the country parishes, on the other hand, where the gentry were *recusants*, deeply disaffected to the established order of things, and sufficiently powerful, church after church was actually dismantled and, as the term was, *ruinated*; while everywhere the buildings

were falling into decay, and the windows were left unglazed when, from mischief or accident, they had been broken. Meanwhile, though Archbishop Whitgift had tried hard to reform the vexations and annoyances which resulted from the odious revival of the petty courts of archdeacons and commissaries,¹ the abuse still went on, and in the archdeaconry of Norwich, certainly as late as 1620, the frequency with which churchwardens and others were cited and worried must have had no small share in aggravating the feeling of soreness against ecclesiastical dignitaries which at last broke out into open rebellion. Yet, strange to say, the status of the clergy in the Norwich diocese during the seventeenth century was very much higher than some writers have asserted it to be, and there was among them not only a large proportion of university men and sons of the gentry with private means, but many men of real learning, whose printed works prove them to have been diligent students.

Bishop JEGON passed the greater portion of his time at the episcopal residence at Ludham, till a fire in 1611 burned the house down and with it some of the muniments of the diocese. After this he retired to Aylsham, in the neighbourhood of which place he had made extensive purchases of land, and here he died, 13th March, 1617. At the palace of Norwich he very rarely, if ever, resided.

¹ It is impossible to dwell upon this subject here, but an instructive monograph might be drawn up upon the vexations of these courts, for which there is abundant evidence in the records of the diocese.

In the twenty-four years that elapsed from the death of Bishop JEGON to the general break up in 1642, no fewer than seven bishops were appointed to the see of Norwich, every one of whom was translated from some other bishopric. That these prelates should have been able to leave any impression upon the diocese during their brief episcopate is not conceivable; only two of them were in any way connected with East Anglia; their average tenure of office was scarcely more than three years, nevertheless they were all men of mark in their generation.

JOHN OVERALL, who was born at Hadleigh in Suffolk, became early a Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Professor of Divinity in that University in 1596. In 1601, he succeeded Nowell as dean of St. Paul's, and in March, 1614, was promoted to the see of Coventry and Lichfield. He was translated to Norwich in May, 1618, and he died a few days less than a year after his election—on the 12th May, 1619. He was a man of profound learning, earnestness, and piety. At Norwich he can have been but little known.

His successor was SAMUEL HARSNET, a man of mean extraction but of great ability. He obtained a fellowship at Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1583, and succeeded Bishop Andrews as master of the college in 1605. He became bishop of Chichester in 1609, and was translated to Norwich in June, 1619. During his episcopate he seems to have shown himself a devout and painstaking prelate, practising moderation and preaching it. Alas! the time for moderate men and their counsels had gone by. The

zealots denounced him as a Papist ; the others hinted that he was at heart a Puritan, or something worse : he answered with some indignation to both charges. In March, 1628, he was entrusted with the drawing up of a petition to Charles I. from both Houses of Parliament, to put the laws against Papists in execution : the petition, though accepted, was disregarded. In the following November he was again translated, this time to the see of York.

Dr. FRANCIS WHITE succeeded ; he was a Cambridge man and of Caius College. He had, in 1617, earned for himself a good reputation as a controversialist by a learned defence of a book which his brother, Dr. John White, had published, entitled, "The Orthodox Faith and Way to the Church." This brought him into notice, and in 1622 he was made dean of Carlisle. Next year he distinguished himself greatly in a controversy with "Fisher the Jesuit,"¹ in the presence of James I., and when the see of Carlisle fell vacant, in 1626, he was appointed to the bishopric. He was translated to Norwich in February, 1629, and again removed to Ely in 1631. He was in money difficulties when he received the bishopric of Carlisle, and was compelled to sell his books. It is hardly probable that he had recovered himself before his last preferment came to him. As bishop of Norwich, he appears to have been a cipher.

His successor was RICHARD CORBET, an Oxford man, celebrated for his exuberant wit, and, like all wits, slandered by the dull for his buffoonery. He

¹ His real name was John Percy.

became dean of Christ Church in 1620, and bishop of Oxford in 1629. He was translated to Norwich in 1632, and there he died in 1635: three years! but three momentous years.

Archbishop Abbot died in 1633, and Laud, then bishop of London, succeeded. He had been virtually primate since the murder of Buckingham in 1628, and, from the time that he began to exercise influence upon Charles I., he never swerved for a single moment from the policy which he believed to be needful for the restoration of discipline in the Church of England, and for the revival of what he believed to be her ancient and Catholic ritual. Inflexible, uncompromising, perfectly regardless of consequences to himself or others when he had persuaded himself that the cause he had espoused was the cause of God, he set himself to bear down all opposition by sheer force of will and the employment of all the instruments of repression and coercion which could by any means be utilised to silence, to frighten, or to punish. The immense stubbornness, the intense sincerity of the primate, made him see in his own purpose a divine mission which it was given to him to discharge: for that mission he lived and died. Looking back upon his career, through all that this Church of England has suffered and achieved during the two centuries and a half since he fell a victim to the passions he had done so much to rouse, it is a question whether that career was a failure after all. Into that question, however, it is impossible to enter here. We have not space for more than a bare enumeration of facts.

The first Parliament of Charles I. assembled on 18th June, 1625, and was dissolved on 12th August. The second met on 26th February, 1626, and was dissolved on 15th June. The third met on 13th March, 1628, was prorogued on the 26th June, re-assembled on 20th January, 1629, and dissolved on 19th March. It is no over-statement to say that the proximate cause of the dissolution of these three Parliaments of Charles I. was the subordination of all legislative business to the demands for the redress of religious grievances. A tempest of religious frenzy was raging. The great mass of the people were not to be calmed by words of menace or by acts of severity; but their leaders and teachers might be silenced, the clergy at least might be forced to conform, and the experiment was made. Hence the futile attempt to force the Liturgy upon Scotland and to settle the Sabbatarian controversy¹ by the issue of the "Book of Sports"; hence, too, the removal of the communion-table to the east end of the chancel, which, though it had been a subject of dispute at Grantham and at Abingdon in 1627, was not authoritatively enjoined till now: and all this in the single year 1633, the first year of Laud's tenure of the archiepiscopal see. Next year the toleration which had been granted for fifty years to the French and Belgian Protestants in London and Norwich was withdrawn, and an exodus from Norfolk to Holland began, hardly less important than that from Belgium to Norfolk in the days of Alva.

¹ First stirred up by a Suffolk clergyman, Theophilus Burne, in 1628.

Under all this pressure, the clergy, as a rule, submitted and conformed. Some sought refuge in flight across the Atlantic, and carried with them to New England and Massachusetts the fierce intolerance and terrible rigour from which they had suffered and learned so well in their old homes.¹ Some sought an asylum in Holland, as Yates and Samuel Ward, who were the popular preachers at Ipswich when Bishop CORBET resided there, and whose congregations were left to make the best of it in the absence of their venerated ministers. But though the clergy might be cowed, the laity were not, and among the mercantile and trading classes who were amassing wealth with unexampled rapidity at the same time that the gentry were spending with unexampled extravagance, there was deep discontent and passionate outcry against the tyranny of the bishops, and especially of the primate. "Men's minds, distempered in this age with . . . a mutinous tendency, were exasperated with such small occasions

¹ The following is a specimen of the laws drawn up for the colony of Massachusetts :—"Whosoever shall profane the Lord's day by doing unnecessary work, by unnecessary travelling, or by sports and recreations, he or they who so transgress shall forfeit forty shillings or be *publicly whipped*; but if it shall appear to have been done presumptuously, such person or persons shall be *put to death*, or otherwise severely punished, at the discretion of the Court. No one shall run on the Sabbath-day, or walk in his garden, or elsewhere, except reverently to and from meeting. No one shall travel, cook victuals, make beds, sweep house, cut hair or shave, on the Sabbath-day."—Dr. Hessey's "Bampton Lectures," p. 285; quoted in Perry's "Church of England," vol. i., p. 437, n.

as otherwise might have been passed over and no notice taken thereof.”¹

In no part of England was there more bitterness of feeling or more fierce antipathy to ecclesiastical order and authority than in East Anglia, and wealthy merchants and others who hated the new *régime* showed much ingenuity in “skulking behind the laws.” A practice had become very common, for such as were possessed of sufficient means, to maintain a *private chaplain* in their families, and in effect to harbour and maintain the non-conforming preachers. The bishops had shown some laxity in ordaining these irregular clergy, with no title but their chaplaincies, and as they were dependent upon their employer for their subsistence, they were practically under no episcopal jurisdiction. Such men were sure to be utilised as itinerants and propagators of their own favourite tenets, and in the flourishing towns of East Anglia we find that their numbers were not inconsiderable.

One of Laud’s earliest injunctions was directed against these “vagrant ministers,” but, from the nature of the case, it was difficult to bring them under episcopal control. Bishop CORBET, among other grounds for congratulation, in his answers to Laud’s inquiries, boasts that he had made “two wandering preachers run out of his diocese”; nevertheless, he adds, “For lectures they abound in Suffolk, and many set up by private gentlemen even without so much as the knowledge of the ordinary.” At Bury St. Edmunds

¹ Fuller.

and at Ipswich, lecturers had been silenced. At Yarmouth there was great division heretofore for many years : “ their lecturer, being censured in the High Commission Court, about two years since went into New England, since which time there hath been no lecture, and very much peace in the town. . . . One in Norwich, one Mr. Bridge, rather than he would conform, hath left his lecture and two cures, and is gone into Holland.”¹

It would, however, be unfair to assume that the efforts of Laud to bring about a stricter uniformity in ritual were anything more than means to a higher end. In his view such uniformity was a *sine quâ non* to the general raising of religious sentiment and religious life. Laxity of all kinds in the clergy was to be sternly reproved, and, if need were, punished. For a generation or more the beneficed clergy had been allowed to reside in their cures or not, as they pleased : they had, in fact, been suffered to go on in their own ways. Living as they had been doing under a strict and jealous *espionage*, there is no reason to believe that their private lives were blameworthy ; on the contrary, rumours to their discredit were very rare : their pri-

¹ The suspended lecturer at Yarmouth was Mr. George Burdett, about whom see Blomefield, xi., 370–372. Mr. William Bridge was a much more celebrated person. He was of Emmanuel College, and at this time rector of St. Peter Hungate, and St. George’s Tombland, in Norwich. At the latter church he held a Friday lecture. He escaped to Rotterdam for a time, but returned in 1642, and was a very popular preacher at Yarmouth. At the Restoration, he was ejected once more. His works were published in five vols., 8vo., in 1845, with a brief memoir.

vate virtues had, in fact, given them, as a class, extraordinary influence and power. But it was clearly for the advantage of the country parishes that non-residence should be discouraged; and Bishop CORBET was quite right when he said, "I think it very fit the beneficed men were presently commanded to reside upon their cures." It was not that there had not been disorder, and great laxity, and great negligence, nor that a reform of church discipline was not grievously needed, but rather because it was so much needed that the crisis called for a ruler of consummate discretion with the tact and suavity, the gentleness and sympathy which were never more conspicuously absent than in the character of Archbishop Laud.

CHAPTER XI.

FOR CONSCIENCE SAKE.

BISHOP CORBET died on the 28th July; his successor was elected on 10th November, 1635. This was Dr. MATTHEW WREN. The new bishop was a very different man from his predecessor. His career at Cambridge was distinguished, and it was while he was Fellow of Pembroke Hall that James I., in 1615, paid his famous visit to Cambridge. Mr. WREN attracted the king's attention by the brilliant way in which he acquitted himself in the "Philosophy Act"; and, after receiving various minor preferments, he was consecrated Bishop of Hereford, on the 8th March, 1635. He can scarcely have received from his first bishopric sufficient to pay the fees of his promotion when he was translated to Norwich.

Two years before the death of Bishop CORBET, Archbishop Laud sent down his vicar-general to hold a visitation of the East Anglian diocese. The report is not a pleasing one; and it appears by it that the cathedral was in a condition of great dilapidation, and "the spire of the steeple quite down." Next year we find it was re-edified, at whose expense is not certainly known.

Bishop WREN's primary visitation was a very memorable one. There is among the Tanner MSS.

at Oxford a considerable body of evidence still existing regarding it, which never has been, but well deserves to be, published. Only the "Particulars, orders, directions, and remembrances," which were issued by the bishop on the occasion, have been printed by Mr. Perry *in extenso*.¹ These orders are constructed exactly on the lines laid down by the primate, and were enforced with inflexible rigour by his faithful suffragan. Irritation and bitterness went on increasing, and the exodus to New England this year is said by the historian of America to have exceeded two thousand. But Bishop WREN never relaxed in his efforts—as if his only notion of preventing a catastrophe, when the explosive force was generating with alarming rapidity, was firmly to press down the safety-valve. For three years he adhered to this policy with disastrous results, and, when he was translated to the see of Ely, in 1638, he left a dismal legacy to his successor, which he in his turn passed on. Dr. RICHARD MONTAGUE had been ten years bishop of Chichester when he was translated to the see of Norwich. On his earlier career, on his literary ability, on his famous book, "*Apello Cæsarem*," on the furious attack upon him by the House of Commons in the first Parliament of Charles I., and again in the second, and on the shower of treatises that rained upon him in answer to his *Appeal*, this is not the place to dwell. When he came to Norwich he was inclined to moderation, but the time for compromise had gone.

¹ "History of the Church of England," vol. ii., Appendix B.

It seems that Bishop MONTAGUE was in failing health when he came to Norwich, and little able to take any active part in the administration of his diocese. Indeed, what would anything have availed then? For more than eleven years there had been no meeting of Parliament. Once more it was called together, assembled on 13th April, and was dissolved on 5th May, 1640. But the convocation of clergy still continued its sittings, and proceeded, under a royal commission, to make new canons. Among them the famous sixth canon, for enforcing the "Et Cætera" oath. Four days after the dissolution of the Parliament, Lambeth Palace was besieged by a furious mob; the nation was in a frenzy, everything was going wrong. At last came the Long Parliament, on 3rd November, 1640. That day week began the attack upon Archbishop Laud. Next month, Pennington, at the head of a vast mob, presented the London petition; a week after, the primate was taken into custody; and these events followed with such rapidity, that in the general confusion it is not easy to mark their sequence. On 12th May, 1641, Lord Strafford was beheaded. On 15th November, JOSEPH HALL, Bishop of Exeter, was elected to the bishopric of Norwich. "On January 30th, 1642, in all the extremity of frost, at eight o'clock in the dark evening," writes the bishop for himself and his episcopal brethren, who had been severally charged with high treason, "are we voted to the Tower, and the news of our imprisonment was entertained with ringing of bells, and bonfires, and men gave us up for lost, railing on our per-

fidiousness, and adjudging us to what foul death they pleased."

In the general confusion and tumult of the next few months it is difficult to trace the fortunes of the now persecuted side, or to discover what actually happened to even the more prominent personages. We only know, that some months after his first imprisonment the bishop was ordered to go down to his diocese. It may safely be said that at this time no divine in England was so universally respected and admired as Bishop HALL; no books were more widely read than his; no preacher was more eagerly listened to or more sought after by all classes. As a disputant he was by far the most formidable controversialist of his time. He was no mean poet, and among the first writers of satirical poetry in the language: He was master of a pure style, at once simple, lucid, and vigorous. He had travelled much upon the Continent, where he was highly esteemed as a polemic of the very first order. In private life he was an example of uprightness, suavity, and open-handed munificence, even when he had been despoiled of all his episcopal income, and a great part of his private fortune besides. If it had not been for a small income which his wife possessed, and the profits of his books, which went on selling during the Interregnum, he would have been in want of bread. When he presented himself at Norwich in the spring of 1642, he was received with much greater cordiality than he had expected; and the day after his arrival in the city he preached to a numerous and attentive congregation. He took up his resi-

dence at the episcopal palace, and set himself, not without success, to win the confidence of all classes. It was all in vain; next year, 1643, Parliament, whose affairs of late had not prospered, growing desperate, and determined to crush the spirit of their opponents and especially of the clergy, passed the terrible *ordinance of sequestration*, and Bishop HALL has told us what followed. An extract from his own account of his troubles at Norwich, will give the reader the best possible picture of the *hard measure* which he had to suffer, and the scenes of violence that he went through :—

“The first noise that I heard of my trouble was, that one morning, before my servants were up, there came to my gates one night a London trooper, attended with others requiring entrance, threatening, if they were not admitted, to break open the gates; whom I found at my first sight struggling with one of my servants for a pistol which he had in his hand. I demanded his business at that unreasonable time; he told me he came to search for arms and ammunition, of which I must be disarmed. I told him I had only two muskets in the house, and no other military provision. He not resting upon my word searched round about the house, looked into the chests and trunks, examined the vessels in the cellar; finding no other warlike furniture, he asked me what horses I had, for his commission was to take them also. I told him how poorly I was stored, and that my age would not allow me to travel on foot. In conclusion, he took one horse for the present, and such account of another that he did highly expostulate

with me afterwards, that I had otherwise disposed of him.

“Now not only my rents present, but the arrearages of the former years, which I had in favour forborne to some tenants, being treacherously confessed to the sequestrators, were by them called for and taken from me ; neither was there any course at all taken for my maintenance. I therefore addressed myself to the committee sitting here at Norwich, and desired them to give order for some means out of that large patrimony of the church to be allowed me.

“They all thought it very just, and there being present Sir Thomas Woodhouse and Sir John Potts, Parliament men, it was moved and held fit by them and the rest, that the proportion which the votes of the Parliament had pitched upon, viz., £400 per annum, should be allowed to me. My lord of Manchester, who was then conceived to have great power in matter of these sequestrations, was moved herewith. He apprehended it very just and reasonable, and wrote to the committee here to let out so many of the manors belonging to this bishopric as should amount to the said sum of £400 annually ; which was answerably done under the hands of the whole table. And now I well hoped, I should yet have a good competency of maintenance out of that plentiful estate which I might have had ; but those hopes were no sooner conceived than dashed, for, before I could gather up one quarter’s rent, there comes down an order from the committee for sequestrations above, under the hand of Sergeant Wild, the chairman, procured by Mr. Miles Corbet, to inhibit

any such allowance ; and telling our committee here, that neither they nor any other had power to allow me anything at all : but if my wife found herself to need a maintenance, upon her suit to the committee of lords and commons, it might be granted that she should have a fifth part according to the ordinance, allowed for the sustentation of herself and her family. Hereupon she sends a petition up to that committee, which after a long delay was admitted to be read and an order granted for the fifth part. But still the rents and revenues both of my spiritual and temporal lands were taken up by the sequestrators both in Norfolk, and Suffolk, and Essex, and we kept off from either allowance or account. At last upon much pressing Beadle the solicitor, and Rust the collector, brought in an account to the committee, such as it was ; but so confused and perplexed and so utterly imperfect, that we could never come to know what a fifth part meant : but they were content that I should eat my books by setting off the sum engaged for them out of the fifth part. Meantime the synodals both in Norfolk and Suffolk, and all the spiritual profits of the diocese, were also kept back, only ordinations and institutions continued a while. But after the covenant was appointed to be taken and was generally swallowed of both clergy and laity, my power of ordination was with some strange violence restrained. For when I was going on in my wonted course (which no law or ordinance had inhibited) certain forward volunteers in the city call me to an account for an open violation of their covenant.

Whiles I received nothing, yet something was required of me. They were not ashamed after they had taken away and sold all my goods and personal estate, to come to me for assessments and monthly payments for that estate which they had taken, and took distresses from me upon my most just denial, and vehemently required me to find the wonted arms of my predecessors, when they had left me nothing. Many insolences and affronts were in all this time put upon us. One while a whole rabble of volunteers came to my gates late, when they were locked up, and called for the porter to give them entrance, which being not yielded, they threatened to make by force, and had not the said gates been very strong they had done it. Others of them clambered over the walls and would come into mine house ; their errand (they said) was to search for delinquents. What they would have done, I know not, had not we by a secret way sent to raise the officers for our rescue. Another while the sheriff Toftes, and Alderman Linsey, attended with many zealous followers, came into my chapel to look for superstitious pictures and relics of idolatry, and sent for me, to let me know they found those windows full of images, which were very offensive, and must be demolished ! I told them they were the pictures of some antient and worthy bishops, as St. Ambrose, Austin, &c. It was answered me, that they were so many popes ; and one younger man amongst the rest (Townsend as I perceived afterwards) would take upon him to defend that every diocesan bishop was pope. I answered him with some scorn, and obtained leave that I might

with the least loss and defacing of the windows, give order for taking off that offence, which I did by causing the heads of those pictures to be taken off since I knew the bodies could not offend.

“ There was not that care and moderation used in reforming the cathedral church bordering upon my palace. It is no other than tragical to relate the carriage of that furious sacrilege, whereof our eyes and ears were the sad witnesses, under the authority and presence of Linsey, Toftes the sheriff, and Greenwood. Lord, what work was here ; what clattering of glasses, what beating down of walls, what tearing up of monuments, what pulling down of seats, what wresting out of irons and brass from the windows and graves ; what defacing of arms, what demolishing of curious stone-work that had not any representation in the world, but only of the cost of the founder and skill of the mason ; what tooting and piping upon the destroyed organ-pipes, and what a hideous triumph on the market day before all the country, when, in a kind of sacrilegious and profane procession, all the organ-pipes, vestments, both copes and surplices, together with the leaden cross, which had been newly sawn down from over the green-yard pulpit, and the service books and singing books that could be had, were carried to the fire in the public market-place ; a lewd wretch walking before the train in his cope trailing in the dirt, with a service book in his hand, imitating in an impious scorn the tune, and usurping the words of the Litany used formerly in the church ! Near the public cross, all these monuments of idolatry must be sacrificed to

the fire, not without much ostentation of a zealous joy in discharging ordnance to the cost of some who professed how much they had longed to see that day. Neither was it any news upon this guild-day to have the cathedral now open on all sides to be filled with musketeers, waiting for the mayor's return, drinking and tobacconing as freely as if it had turned alehouse."¹

* * * * *

Though the spoilers began at the bishop they did not end with him. Throughout the whole diocese, wherever a clergyman was suspected of any loyalty to his sovereign, or any dislike of the dominant faction in Parliament, he was ousted from his preferment without ceremony and without pity. Some hundreds of the Norfolk and Suffolk clergy were turned out of doors, in most cases at a few hours' notice; nor were they only deprived of their livings and all emoluments derivable from the benefice, but their private estates were heavily taxed to bear the expenses of the war against the king; the more valuable the living the more sure was the incumbent to be denounced as a malignant.

The frivolous charges made against some of the country clergy would seem to us quite incredible if they were not so well authenticated, and the rancorous cruelty with which some were persecuted for years after they were ejected is almost unexampled, even in the deplorable annals of bigotry and intolerance. In many instances an ejected minister, finding himself penniless, supported himself by taking pupils,

¹ See Note (F).

and even from this means of livelihood he was not unfrequently debarred. Thus Mr. Lionel Gatford, who had been turned out of the living of Dennington in Suffolk, set up a school at Keninghall. Just as he was prospering in his new occupation, it was found out that he still persisted in using the Liturgy; he was hunted down, and compelled to remove from place to place, again and again driven from his home. Mr. Hugh Williams, who was ejected from the living of Forncett, settled at Low Leyton in Essex, and opened a school, which was thriving fairly when he received a command to desist from his occupation. The same thing happened to Mr. Nathaniel Goodwin, vicar of Cransford, and to Thomas Tyllot, rector of Depden, when the ordinance came out that no sequestered minister should be allowed to teach a private school. Yet, as always happens, and always will happen, persecution brought out in many of the oppressed some very noble examples of generosity and the highest Christian virtues. The rector of St. Margaret's, Ipswich, Geast by name, might amuse himself with a somewhat grim joke when he told his friends that he had counted the words in the Solemn League and Covenant and found them to number exactly six hundred and sixty and six; and the rector of Burgh, near Aylsham, might enjoy the fun of keeping the parish register in his own possession, and leave on record how he had persisted in using the Book of Common Prayer for years after he had been ejected, had married people with the ring, and had baptised children with the sign of the cross; but for the most part the sense

of wrong was too deep, and the sorrow and trouble too poignant to allow of any but such reflections as soften a man and bring out the best parts of his character. Thus Lawrence Bretton, when ejected from his living of Hitcham in Suffolk, and plundered of his landed estates, managed to live in some comfort on the interest of money which he had put out. He retired to Hadleigh, his birthplace, and there became known for his liberal almsgiving and his daily use of the service, which he read to all who chose to attend. Lionel Playters, again, after being deprived of his living of Uggheshall, never ceased to exercise his ministry, and years after he had succeeded to a baronetcy by the death of his elder brother, continued to preach regularly, and did so to the end of his life, though the Restoration had come before then and he had exchanged poverty for affluence. The story of the parishioners of Dickleburgh vainly endeavouring to retain their dearly loved rector, and combining to protect him and his property when the sequestrators came to rob him, is one of the most touching narratives in all that sad collection of heart-rending stories with which Walker's pages are filled.

Bishop HALL died 8th September, 1656, in the eighty-third year of his age. He never left his diocese, but spent his later years at Heigham, a suburb of Norwich, dispensing to the last his gentle charities, and showing a brave heart and a Christian temper which all the malice of his enemies could not ruffle. When the Restoration came at last, after eighteen years of bitter trial, there was no bishop of Norwich,

nor dean of the cathedral, nor a single archdeacon. One of the prebends—Spendlove—was in prison for debts contracted in his deep poverty which he had not the means of paying. The single other representative of the chapter who survived to see Charles II. proclaimed, was Edward Young, who soon was transferred to the deanery of York. The churches had become deplorably dilapidated, the parsonage-houses in many cases were roofless and ruinous, but the great mass of the people were utterly weary of a condition of affairs which had become intolerable. Even the generation which had grown up under the new *régime* looked with eagerness to the hope of a *Restoration* in the State and in the Church.

Oliver Cromwell died 3rd September, 1658, three years after the cruel edict was issued which forbade that any ejected clergyman should be permitted to keep any school, public or private, or preach in any public place or at any private meeting. When this edict was carried into effect, things had almost come to their worst in the Church of England. Richard Cromwell called a Parliament on the 27th January, 1659, and dissolved it on the 22nd April. Then followed the resuscitation of the Long Parliament in the person of its forty-two surviving members, and the quarrel between this Parliament—the Rump—and the army. At last the Restoration came, and Charles II. entered London as king on the 29th May, 1660.

Since the judicial murder of Archbishop Laud, seventeen of the bishops had died. At the Restoration there were nine prelates still alive who had survived the long period of plunder and persecution ;

one of them, Bishop WREN, formerly of Norwich and afterwards of Ely, was still a prisoner in the Tower, though he had never been brought to trial. The clergy were divided into two great parties ; the one consisted of those who had been episcopally ordained in the old days, and in large numbers had been ejected from their livings for their loyalty and attachment to the Liturgy ; the other party was composed of such as were, more or less, opposed to episcopacy altogether, who had themselves received orders by the laying-on of the hands of the presbytery only, and who had nothing to gain and everything to lose by the bringing in again of the old order. Many of these latter had supplanted the old incumbents, and for years had enjoyed their benefices. What was to become of them now ? Where the ejected clergy were still alive they were forthwith reinstated into their livings ; where they had died off, the interlopers were allowed to remain for a while, at any rate, undisturbed.

Outside the Church there were the sects to deal with. By far the most powerful of these were the Independents. They may be said to have risen into notice first in the diocese of Norwich, and it was here that they first became a formidable and aggressive body under the original leadership of Robert Browne in Suffolk, and subsequently under the far abler and more saintly John Robinson at Norwich. Driven out of England, they settled for some years in Holland. When the ordinance for the sequestration of the bishops' estates was passed they returned in great numbers to their own country, and met with a cordial reception in some quarters. They

were well represented in the assembly of divines, and from henceforth appear as a recognised party in all the religious warfare that ensued. Oliver Cromwell for some time seemed to throw his whole influence into their scale ; perhaps he was using them for his own ends. It was the irrepressible self-assertion of their ministers that gained for them a fictitious importance wholly out of proportion to their numbers. But, while the Church was divided into *Episcopalians* and *Presbyterians*, the Independents were the spokesmen of the sects ; and outside of these again, and opposed by all the rest, were those who were in communion with the Church of Rome, and who were known by the old name of reproach as *Papists*.

Three great matters required to be dealt with, and at once : (1) the filling up the vacant bishoprics ; (2) the settling of the difficult problem of Presbyterian ordination ; (3) the measure of toleration to the sectaries.

Before filling up the vacant sees, it was deemed necessary to restore the cathedral chapters, with whom, technically, the election of the bishops lay. To the deanery of Norwich the king appointed Dr. John Crofts, whose brother, William Lord Crofts, was at this time high in favour. The prebendaries of the third and fourth stalls had been appointed before the rebellion and ejected ; they returned to their places, of course. Mr. Spendlove, who had been promoted as early as 1616 to the sixth prebend, had been utterly beggared, and died almost in want in 1666. The vacant stalls were filled up by very competent men, one of them being Dr. Vincent

Piers, chaplain to Charles II., as he had formerly been to his father.

To the bishopric was elected on the 28th November, 1660, Dr. EDWARD REYNOLDS, and he was consecrated in Henry VII.'s Chapel 6th January, 1661. Though Bishop REYNOLDS had been identified for years with the Presbyterians, and had, indeed, been a prominent divine of the party, yet he had experienced persecution himself at the hands of the zealots, and after being a member of the Assembly, one of the visitors of the University of Oxford, and then Dean of Christ Church, he, too, had been ejected from his deanery during the domination of the Independents, and kept out of it for nine years. Associated as he had been with Richard Baxter and Dr. Calamy, there was a doubt whether or not he would follow their example and decline the bishopric; it was well for Norwich that wiser counsels prevailed, and a man so learned, earnest, and conscientious, should have been appointed at this crisis to preside over the see.

II. Before long it became evident that it was impossible to avoid adopting measures which would press heavily upon many who could not be prevailed on to submit themselves to the revived discipline or to consent to episcopal ordination, and that happened with several Presbyterians who had ousted others, and were ejected themselves in their turn.

In the diocese of Norwich it appears that sixty-seven ministers were ejected from their cures. Of these, nine afterwards conformed. Eleven were holding benefices the incumbents of which had been dispossessed eighteen years before, and had survived

the Commonwealth ; thus the number of those who were cast out "for conscience sake" in the diocese of Norwich amounted to forty-seven, all told. How inconsiderable this number was in comparison with those who had suffered the loss of all things during the Rebellion may be easily gathered from the fact that, eighteen years after the sequestration ordinance of 1642, there were still thirty-one beneficed clergymen who are known to have been alive, and who thought it worth while to petition the House of Lords for restitution ; while of that far larger number who had died of misery and want, and of those who, being still alive, had not the heart or the means to incur the expense, or whose livings were not worth asking for again, no account has been taken, and little record remains¹ except such as the diligence of John Walker could collect more than fifty years after the Restoration had been brought about.

III. The attempt to grant toleration to all again failed deplorably. It was violently resisted by those who were most vehement in demanding it for themselves ; for, though the *Dissenters* were loud in claiming the right to worship God after their own fashion, they were louder still in denying liberty of conscience to the *Papists*. Intolerance won the day, and there-

¹ The whole number of clergy in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk deprived of their cures can hardly be estimated at less than 250. Walker gives the names and sufferings of 214. The list is confessedly incomplete, and requires to be supplemented by the collections of those who have carried on researches on the subject. It must be remembered that there were several livings in the Isle of Ely which were then comprehended in the diocese of Norwich.

upon followed in too rapid succession those infamous Acts which are the disgrace of our Statute Book, and which only too late were at last happily swept away. Who can think, without a blush, of the *Act of Uniformity*, the *Conventicle Act*, and the *Five-mile Act*, and all the shameful proceedings which ensued as the inevitable consequence of those un-Christian laws? It must not be forgotten, however, that the cruelty practised in some dioceses was by no means observable in all; and, under a prelate such as was Bishop REYNOLDS, the treatment received by the Nonconformists was not likely to be as bad as it unhappily was elsewhere. We hear of no harshness in East Anglia.

In at least five¹ of the churches of Norwich, the ministers who had been intruded into the cures during the Commonwealth were suffered to remain undisturbed, though they were presumably men of decided Presbyterian leaning. One clergyman, the rector of All Saints', who had been instituted as far back as 1624, retained his living through all the troubled times, never left his cure, and died at his post after an incumbency of fifty-two years, in 1679. But the most interesting case is that of John Whitefoot. He was a close personal friend of Bishop Hall's, and by him presented to the benefice in 1652, ten years after HALL had himself been driven from his bishopric

¹ 1. St. Peter's Mancroft; 2. St. Edmund's; 3. St. Saviour's; 4. St. Augustine's; 5. St. Stephen's. Dr. Collings, though ejected from this parish as vicar, continued to minister here and at St. Saviour's till 1678, at any rate; how much longer, I have not been able to ascertain.

and plundered in different ways ; but he still retained his patronage of the rectory of Heigham *by virtue of his being Abbot of Hulm*. Mr. Whitefoot held the living for thirty years undisturbed.

During Bishop REYNOLDS's episcopate, no less than three future archbishops of Canterbury were more or less connected with the see of Norwich. At the time of the Restoration, Sancroft was living on his property at Fressingfield, in Suffolk, after having been ejected from his fellowship at Emmanuel College, Cambridge. Tillotson became Rector of Redington, in the same county, in 1662, and held it for two or three years. Tenison was minister of St. Peter's Mancroft, in the city of Norwich, at the time that Bishop REYNOLDS died.

For sixteen years the bishop's mild and gentle rule continued. In the great plague of 1666, his charity to the needy and distressed was unbounded. He exerted himself strenuously to improve the condition of the poorer clergy, and by his noble example stimulated others to do the same. In renewing his leases, he systematically reserved substantial annuities to be paid to the impoverished incumbents whom, under the system of impropriations, the monks had plundered in the old time ; and in his will he gave proofs of his thoughtful munificence by the legacies he left behind him. One great supreme gift he gave, not to his diocese alone, but to the Church of England, for which his name deserves to be remembered with lasting gratitude by all who worship within her pale. How few there are who pour out their hearts in the words of her daily office who know that the adoring

words of the General Thanksgiving are the composition of EDWARD REYNOLDS, bishop of Norwich, and that it was he who drew up that matchless contribution to the Book of Common Prayer!

Bishop REYNOLDS died 28th July, 1676, and was succeeded by ANTHONY SPARROW, translated from the see of Exeter.

Bishop SPARROW was born at Depden in Suffolk, where, upon a considerable estate which he had inherited from his father, he lived for eleven years after he had been ejected from his fellowship at Queen's College, Cambridge, and subsequently from the rectory of Hawkedon in his native county. The year before Cromwell died he published his well-known "Rationale upon the Book of Common Prayer," and this at a time when the use of it was forbidden under heavy penalties. While bishop he seems to have lived in the palace at Norwich habitually,¹ and to have been much respected and beloved; he died 19th May, 1685, after an episcopate of nearly nine years, during which, in the face of great difficulties, he certainly contrived to work some change for the better, though in such an age reforms were hard to carry out when among clergy and laity earnestness and zeal were rare.

There is no epoch in the history of England more humiliating to look back upon than the year 1685; that year when a king of England meanly apostatised upon his deathbed; when, in defiance of every

¹ When Bishop REYNOLDS came to Norwich he found the palace *let out in tenements*, and in sore decay; the palace chapel was a ruin. The latter he entirely rebuilt.

honourable engagement, mass was publicly said at Whitehall; when the cruelties practised upon the wretched Titus Oates were but the beginning of that series of atrocities perpetrated upon the unhappy rebels in Scotland, the butcheries of the Bloody Assize, and the infamous persecution of the Dissenters which raged during the autumn. On these horrors we are happily not called to dwell.

James II. succeeded to the throne 5th February; Bishop SPARROW died on the 19th of May. On that day Parliament assembled, and among its first acts it resolved itself into a grand committee of religion, as if to show that the old differences still existed and the old quarrels were not dead. Then came the summer of rebellion, ending with the battle of Sedgmoor on the 6th July. Two days before this event, WILLIAM LLOYD, a Welshman, succeeded to the bishopric of Norwich. Bishop Lloyd had been consecrated to Llandaff ten years before;¹ thence he was removed to Peterborough in 1679, and now finally was translated to the East Anglian see. The new bishop was a man of no learning or academical reputation, and had left St. John's College, Cambridge, shortly after taking his degree. After spending some years abroad, he appears to have returned to England at the Restoration, and to have been made preben-

¹ There was another Bishop William Lloyd, who is very liable to be confused with the Bishop of Norwich. He was Fellow of Jesus College, Oxford, was made Dean of Bangor, 1672; Bishop of St. Asaph, 1680; translated to Lichfield, 1692; and to Worcester, 1699. He died in 1717. He was one of the seven bishops sent to the Tower in 1688.

dary of St. Paul's in 1672. His promotion followed rapidly, but he was one whose conscience did not allow him to sell himself for lucre, and the infatuation of James II. in attempting to bring the nation into subjection to the papacy left him no choice as to his course. When the declaration for liberty of conscience was published in 1687,—a measure intended to outwit everybody and which deceived nobody,—Bishop LLOYD acted with great promptness, and managed to get a letter from himself to his clergy printed and circulated before the objectionable document was in their hands. The result was that the declaration was not read at all in his diocese. It was by an accident that his name did not appear among the signatories to the petition to the king against the declaration, and he thereby escaped being thrown into the Tower with the seven bishops whose action contributed so much to hurry on the inevitable crisis. The crisis came and found Bishop LLOYD confused by his own scruples, and mastered by the genius and casuistry of abler men than himself. Sancroft, the primate, seems to have obtained a great ascendancy over him, and by Sancroft's course he set his own. Thus, when it became necessary for him to take the oath of allegiance to William III., he refused, was ejected from his bishopric, and was thrust into a position for which he was wholly unfit, as leader of the Nonjurors. From that moment he seems to have lost his head. He wrote nothing, did nothing, was nothing but a clumsy intriguer. He had been an excellent preacher—to his gift of pulpit oratory he owed his promotion,—but now he was silenced; he became seri-

ously implicated in the disgraceful plot with which the name of another Nonjuror,—Turner, bishop of Ely,—is associated, and from his suburban retreat he kept up very suspicious relations with the Jacobite malcontents at home and abroad. For nineteen years he lived in his retirement, suspected but unmolested. However important a personage he may have seemed in his own eyes or in those of his ever-diminishing followers, he had utterly effaced himself, and nothing could have convinced him more bitterly of the folly of his career and its failure than the calm indifference with which he was treated by the sovereign, who could afford to take no notice of him or of his designs.

The schism of the Nonjurors was, undoubtedly, a serious injury to the Church of England, and the more serious because it occurred exactly at a time when the old divisions seemed to be in a fair way of healing up, and when united action was supremely necessary; but the vacant preferments were filled without difficulty by the appointment of divines hardly, if at all, inferior to those who left their posts. The whole number of those who were deprived scarcely exceeded four hundred, and in the diocese of Norwich only about twenty, and among them not a single man of any note or eminence, joined the party of secession. In the changes that ensued upon the Revolution, however, the cathedral suffered one great loss in the promotion of Dr. John Sharp from the deanery of Norwich to the deanery of Canterbury, whence he was removed to the archbishopric of York. A man of rare earnestness, learning, and discretion, and of a generous nature, he would have become a power

for good in the East Anglian metropolis had he been suffered to remain ; he was, unfortunately, succeeded by a miserable creature whose only title to preferment was the prominent part he had taken in resisting James II.'s attempt to Romanise Oxford and to force a nominee of his own into the Headship of Magdalen College. Dr. Fairfax has been wickedly slandered, or he was the most disgraceful person who ever occupied the deanery.

Bishop LLOYD died at Hammersmith, January 1, 1709. Nearly twenty-four years before, his entry into his diocese had resembled a triumphal procession. In the spring of 1686, his confirmation had been attended by hundreds, and of all ages. On one occasion three of the aldermen of Norwich, with their wives and families, had presented themselves at the rite. Everywhere he had been welcomed with enthusiasm. Twenty years had passed, and he was forgotten.

One act of his during his retirement must not be passed over without notice, though it can only be mentioned with regret and shame. On the 24th November, 1694, Bishop LLOYD, in conjunction with Turner, the deprived bishop of Ely, and White, actual bishop of Peterborough, consecrated Dr. George Hickes as bishop of Thetford, and Thomas Wagstaffe as bishop of Ipswich.¹ It was a discreditable pro-

¹ Dr. Hickes was one of the most learned scholars of his day. He had been Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, and was preferred to the deanery of Worcester in 1683. Mr. Wagstaffe was a much more insignificant person ; he was rector of the united parishes of St. Margaret Pattens and St. Gabriel, Fen-

ceeding to all concerned, though, as the event proved, it was less mischievous than futile. Mr. Wagstaffe is heard of no more. Dr. Hickes, some years after, exercised his episcopal functions, and unwisely.

The Nonjurors died out, as a matter of course ; the curse of schism clung to them. The Church of England lost them, but, by their secession, none gained.

Bishop LLOYD was the sixth bishop of Norwich in direct succession, each of whom had suffered more or less severely in person or in substance for conscience sake.

To recapitulate.

Bishop WREN was a prisoner in the Tower for eighteen years.

Bishop MONTAGUE was the object of unrelenting attacks by the Parliament, and was with difficulty delivered out of their hands.

Bishop HALL's sufferings are well known.

Bishop REYNOLDS was ejected from the deanery of Christ Church in 1650.

Bishop SPARROW was turned out of the living of Hawkdon, in Suffolk, and kept out of it for eleven years.

These were all cast out by others. Bishop LLOYD may, with justice, be said to have forced the " powers that be " to an exercise of severity they would gladly have been spared.

church-street, London, from which he was ejected. He appears to have been a somewhat popular preacher.

CHAPTER XII.

ONWARD !

OH, not for baneful self-complacency,
 Not for the setting-up our present selves
 To triumph o'er our past (worst pride of all),
 May we compare this present with that past ;
 But to provoke renew'd acknowledgments,
 But to incite unto an earnest hope
 For all our brethren ! * * *
 * * * * *
 * * * * * Be it ours,
 Both thine and mine, to ask for that calm frame
 Of spirit, in which we know and deeply feel
 How little we can do, and yet do that.

BISHOP MOORE held the see of Norwich for sixteen years ; he was consecrated on the 5th July, 1691, but it was more than a year before he appeared in his diocese. He had been one of the London clergy for some time before, and the London clergy now were monopolising all the preferment. A Cambridge man and fellow of St. Catharine Hall for several years, he was a great favourer of Cambridge men. His love of books was a passion with him, and his immense library was purchased at his death by George I. and given to the University of Cambridge. During all the miserable contentions that make the history of convocation in the reign of Queen Anne such depressing reading, Bishop MOORE sided with

the moderate party, and in his appointments he carefully avoided any countenance of the extremists.

At no period before or since has the diocese of Norwich been able to boast of so many divines of learning and influence occupying prominent positions in the capitular body, and holding representative preferment, as during the time of Bishop Moore. The four archdeacons were all men of mark. Dr. Jeffery, the eloquent and exemplary minister of St. Peter's Mancroft, the editor of Whichcote's Discourses, was archdeacon of Norwich.¹ Dr. TRIMNELL, who succeeded to the bishopric after Bishop MOORE'S removal from the see, was archdeacon of Norfolk. Mr. Nicholas Clagget was archdeacon of Sudbury, son of another Nicholas who had been a very notable lecturer at Bury St. Edmunds during the Commonwealth days, and intimately associated while there with Edward Calamy the Elder. When the father retired from his lectureship, his eldest son, Dr. William Clagget, succeeded to the post, and when he again retired, on being made Preacher to Gray's Inn, our Nicholas was elected, and won a high reputation for ability, zeal, and learning. But the most vigorous and energetic personage in the diocese was Dr. Humphrey Prideaux, a scholar of large and varied reading and a man of great energy of character; foremost in every good work, intolerant of everything that savoured of slovenliness and neglect, he could make himself extremely disagreeable to a dissolute or worthless functionary, and was apt to

¹ He, too, was of the Bishop's own College, St. Catharine's Hall.

speak out so plainly that all men did not love him. Dr. Prideaux became dean of the Cathedral in 1702, but held his archdeaconry with the deanery till his death. One characteristic of his visitation charges has been handed down to us,—he was very earnest in advocating the duty of family prayer.

But the archdeacons were far from being the only notables at this time in the diocese. In the appointment of his chaplains Bishop MOORE showed his tastes very plainly. Among them were William Whiston (Sir Isaac Newton's successor as Lucasian Professor), an eccentric personage, who, however, had not yet propounded his wild theories; Dr. Samuel Clarke, another audacious genius, whose contemporaries regarded him as one of the lights of the world; and Thomas Tanner, author of the "*Notitia Monastica*," who became chancellor of the diocese in 1701.¹ How diligent and laborious a student Dr. Tanner was of the episcopal records, and how ably he epitomised the vast mass of documents that he studied so carefully, they know best who have had most occasion to refer to his precious volumes and to experience the boundless courtesy of their preesnt accomplished custodian.²

There were two other men of mark whom Bishop

¹ Dr. Tanner married a daughter of Bishop Moore's, and became eventually Bishop of St. Asaph.

² How he became possessor of the famous collection of MSS. now in the Bodleian, whether he had any right to appropriate them or to alienate them, and who are the rightful owners of the collection, are questions which it might be inconvenient to answer, and perhaps to ask.

MOORE had intended to patronise, but who broke away from Norwich early in their career. These were the brothers John and Benjamin Hoadley. Bishop MOORE had brought their father, Samuel Hoadley, back to Norwich, his birthplace, and obtained for him the head mastership of the grammar school in 1699. John Hoadley, the future archbishop of Armagh, was sub-master of the school for some time. Benjamin, the more famous bishop of Winchester, first became notorious while lecturer at St. Mildred's, Poultry,—the rector of which church was Dr. Martin, a prebendary of Norwich. Though Benjamin Hoadley was another Catharine Hall man,¹ Bishop MOORE seems to have dropped him as a *protégé* after his much talked-of sermon before the Lord Mayor in 1705.

It was during Bishop MOORE's episcopate that a change for the better began in the moral and religious condition of society in England which was most sorely needed. The earnest and prayerful efforts of the societies for reformation of manners were rewarded with marked success—clergy and laity, Churchmen and Dissenters uniting cordially in their endeavours to minimise the dreadful evils which required to be put an end to. In 1698 the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge was founded. It appears from Prideaux' letters that twenty years before this an attempt had been made to organise something like a Church Missionary Society. Prideaux' paper on the subject is printed in his Life. In 1701 the

¹ He entered at St. Catharine Hall, in 1692, as a pensioner under the future Bishop KING.

Society for the Propagation of the Gospel received its charter. With much to deplore, there was much to encourage, and sanguine men may well have taken heart, and, as they watched the outlook, prophesied that better days were coming. Yet they came not.

Bishop MOORE was translated to Ely in 1707, and was succeeded by Dr. CHARLES TRIMNELL, who, together with his stall at Norwich, held the rectory of St. James's, Westminster, and had formerly been Preacher at the Rolls. He made his public entry into the city 21st May, 1707, and held the bishopric till 1721, when he in his turn was translated to the see of Winchester. His episcopate was uneventful ; the old generation of distinguished clergymen, who had once been the pride of the diocese, passed away ; their successors were nonentities, of whom there is nothing to record.

There was, however, one living link between the days of Bishop MOORE and the dismal apathy of the Georgian era. When Archbishop Tenison was plain Mr. Tenison and a popular preacher at Norwich, there was a lad of sixteen at Norwich school who had shown signs of great ability, and whose name had been entered at Tenison's own college — Corpus Christi—in July, 1674. This was THOMAS GREEN, son of a gentleman of the same name, a parishioner of the future primate's, and a man of substance in the city. Tenison took great interest in the youth, who, in process of time, became fellow, tutor, and master of his college, obtained the hand of a sister of Dr. TRIMNELL in marriage, and, after being made the primate's domestic chaplain, and then archdeacon

of Canterbury, succeeded his brother-in-law as bishop of Norwich, to which see he was consecrated 8th October, 1721. Having attained the proud position of bishop in his own birthplace, most men would have been content to rest there to the end; but Bishop GREEN was of a different mind. *Altiora peto* seems to have been his motto, and, accordingly, having got all that could be hoped for from Norwich, he, less than two years after his consecration, consented to be translated to the richer see of Ely, where he died, at the age of eighty, on the 18th of May, 1738. He was the author of some writings, which were printed, and, possibly, at some time read. His brief term of office at Norwich must have been a disappointment to the diocese, which had a right to expect something from her own son. If he was soon forgotten and little regretted, it may have been that he did not deserve to be remembered.

Bishop GREEN's successor was another Cambridge man, and another of those fellows of St. Catherine's Hall who rose to high preferment; this was JOHN LENG, who was famous in his day as a Latin scholar, and was Boyle lecturer in 1718 and 1719. George I. made him one of his chaplains. He held the bishopric for just four years, and died of the small-pox, in London, in October, 1727. Dr. WILLIAM BAKER was bishop of Norwich for five years, having been translated to the see from Bangor. If he ever resided in his diocese, no record of his residence remains. He died at Bath, in December, 1732. Dr. ROBERT BUTTS, dean of the cathedral, to which he had been appointed a short month before, suc-

ceeded. He was a Suffolk man ; appears to have been a good preacher of sermons, and to have shown some zeal and earnestness in his diocese ; but once more the bishopric of Ely proved an attraction which has so often proved irresistible to an East Anglian prelate, and to that see accordingly he was translated in 1738, and gave place to Dr. THOMAS GOOCH, ancestor of the present Sir Francis Gooch, Bart., of Benacre Hall, Suffolk.¹

The bishop was translated from Bristol to Norwich, and thence to Ely in 1748. Horace Walpole has a sneer to throw at him ; but he had not held the bishopric four years before he founded the valuable society for the support of the widows and orphans of the clergy of the diocese, which has continued ever since in a quiet, unostentatious way to relieve poverty and sorrow in many a stricken family.

Bishop SAMUEL LISLE, translated from St. Asaph, was bishop of Norwich for barely six months. Bishop HAYTOR was consecrated on the 3rd December, 1749. He was a divine with a character for honesty and zeal rare in that bad time ; he had been archdeacon of York, chaplain to George II., and tutor to George III., but in the Church of England in those days clergy and laity were slumbering. People thought only of politics, if they thought at all.²

Religious life had never been at so low an ebb. It

¹ The bishop succeeded his brother as second baronet in 1751.

² "The people had no turn for controversy. The Church had no writers to make them fond of it again."—HORACE WALPOLE, "History of George II.," vol. i., p. 147.

was in Bishop HAYTOR's days that the Wesleyan movement first made itself felt in the eastern counties, though, to a much less degree, than in the south and west. Whitfield made more than one visit to Norwich, but with no very great results: the cold and lethargic temperament of the East Anglian people is not easily stirred to enthusiasm; soon roused to hatred; they are very slow to love, and the emotional in them seems to be reached only through their resentment. Wesley appears to have been shocked and horrified by the reception accorded him in the diocese of Norwich. His "Journal" is full of lamentations at the "perverseness" and "fickleness" of the people. In 1758 he writes,—“It seems the time is come when our labour *even in* Norwich will not be in vain.” Next year he is there again. *The Society* had lost ground, and, when he preached, the “congregation was rude and noisy.” On the 2nd February, 1761, he preached in the cathedral. He says, “Bedlam broke out among the hearers,” and “the unparalleled fickleness of the people in these parts” moved his righteous ire. Three years after this he tells us *the Society* had dwindled down to 174, and he writes:—“I have seen no people in all England or Ireland so changeable as this.” Wesley did not think the Norfolk men improved upon acquaintance. At Yarmouth, *the Society*, in 1769, had become “shattered by divisions,” and in 1774 a former class-leader had actually the audacity to call his sermon “damnable doctrine.” At Norwich, he says, they are “unstable as water,” and “marvellous ignorance prevails among the generality of people.” And in 1785 he declares

them to be "the most fickle and yet the most stubborn."

Bishop HAYTOR was promoted to the see of London on the accession of George III., and Dr. PHILIP YONGE succeeded him as bishop of Norwich. The new bishop was a Cambridge man. He had been fellow of Trinity, and was elected public orator of the University in 1746. Bishop GOOCH had appointed him Master of Jesus College in 1752. Next year he was preferred to a stall in St. Paul's, and in 1758 he became bishop of Bristol. He held the see of Norwich for twenty-two years. It is said he owed his many preferments to the favour of the Duke of Newcastle, whose duchess he escorted from Hanover to England. Of him, too,—of his sayings or writings or doings,—history is silent. When he died in 1783, Dr. LEWIS BAGOT was translated from Bristol to succeed him,—a mild and amiable gentleman, with some pretension to learning, for his Warburtonian lectures were famous in their day. He was again translated, in 1790, to the see of St. Asaph, and Dr. GEORGE HORNE, dean of Canterbury, was consecrated bishop in his room. Bishop Horne was author of a commentary on the Psalms, which was held in very high esteem till late in the present century. There is a very pleasing sketch of the society at Oxford among the younger men in the life of Horne by Jones of Nayland, his chaplain and intimate friend; there appears to have been among them quite an enthusiasm for Biblical studies. Wesley's last visit to Norfolk was in October, 1790; he was then in his eighty-eighth year, and he was cheered by finding the

clergy of Lynn giving him a friendly welcome. At Diss, he applied to the rector for leave to preach in his church. Bishop HORNE happened to be staying in the neighbourhood; the rector hesitated, and put himself in communication with the bishop, who, when he had heard the case, gave just the answer we should have expected of him: "Mr. Wesley is a regularly ordained minister of the Church of England, and if Mr. Manning has no objection to Mr. Wesley's preaching in his church, I can have none." Bishop Horne was a devout and learned student when such men were rare, but his health and strength had begun to fail him before he came to Norwich. The charge which he had prepared for his primary visitation was never delivered. He was hardly a year in his diocese, and died in January, 1792, when he had left it to pass the winter elsewhere. With his successor, Bishop MANNERS SUTTON, who became primate in 1805, the eighteenth century came to an end.

The Georgian era in the diocese of Norwich was a period of such deadness as had never been known before, and which we may well pray may never be known again. When elsewhere religious life began to revive, and Cecil and Romaine were awakening the enthusiasm of multitudes by their fervent preaching in London, and Simeon had become a power in Cambridge, and Joseph Milner was doing the work of an evangelist in the North, and Henry Venn was exercising his great and wide influence for good, and Bishop Porteous was fighting a good fight and driving buyers and sellers from the temple of God, and showing an example of devotion and zeal, East Anglia

still slumbered on. Among the cathedral clergy there is hardly to be found a single name in the whole course of the eighteenth century distinguished in any way whatever; not one who in his generation earned that highest of all distinctions, a reputation for conspicuous labours and conspicuous success as a minister of Christ. And yet it is to be hoped that here and there, in remote country villages, unknown and neglected, there were some who were prayerfully doing the work of evangelising their people; men whose names have passed away from memory, simply because they were labouring so humbly and patiently, sowing the good seed for the time to come. Such a one was John Venn, the rector of Little Dunham from 1783 to 1792, who has left us a touching picture of the state of his parish two years before he was removed from it to Clapham, where the great work of his life was done. But what must have been the state of affairs in the diocese at large when Mr. Venn could write it down as if there were nothing extraordinary in the fact that, on his coming to Dunham in 1783, he was actually *the first rector who had resided upon the benefice for seventy-five years!*

Since the day when Bishop MANNERS SUTTON was translated to Canterbury in 1805, four prelates have presided over the diocese of Norwich.

HENRY BATHURST, from 1805 to 1837, the mild and lovable gentleman whose courtliness and grace are still remembered by the few who can look back to fifty years ago.

EDWARD STANLEY, second son of Sir John Stanley,

Bart., brother of the first Baron Stanley of Alderley, and father of the much more famous Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, dean of Westminster. Bishop Stanley had been for more than thirty years rector of the family living of Alderley in Cheshire at the date of his promotion, and is the only instance in the whole history of the diocese of a mere country parson, who had enjoyed no other preferment of any kind, being appointed bishop of the see. Nevertheless, it may be doubted whether any prelate since HERBERT LOSINGA'S days has ever wrought so marked and salutary a change in the East Anglian diocese as was effected during the short twelve years of his episcopate. It was Bishop STANLEY who began in earnest that vigorous stirring of the dry bones which has never since his days been allowed to rest, which continued through Bishop HIND'S time, and which has been kept up with such unflinching resolution by the present bishop of the see. Posterity will be better able than we are to estimate the force of the current that has been flowing, and to give to each several labourer the credit that is his due. The history of the diocese of Norwich during the nineteenth century would require a volume to itself, and would prove to be a very suggestive and a very instructive volume, but it must be left to others to compile. There are, however, some very eloquent facts which speak for themselves, and which those who are tempted to despair of the days to come will do well to ponder, for history points with one finger to the future as she points another to the past.

When Bishop STANLEY came to the diocese in

1837, there were upwards of 500 beneficed clergymen not residing upon their cures. In twenty years 236 of these clergy had been compelled to erect or repair their glebe houses and to reside in their parishes, and in another twenty years the total number of non-residents from all causes amounted to 101.

In 1838 there were upwards of 500 parishes with only a single service on Sunday. Now, it is difficult to find a church—except where there are two churches in the same parish or in the immediate vicinity—where divine worship is not enforced twice, at least, in the House of God.

The work of education during the last quarter of a century has been largely taken out of the hands of the clergy ; but for the sacrifices made by them as a body in the diocese,—made in the past and still being made now,—posterity will give them that due reward of wondering gratitude which the present generation, consumed by sectarian jealousy and political bitterness, withholds.

They who remember the confirmations of sixty years ago tell us stories which shall not be repeated here. But who that has been once present at the celebration of that most touching rite of the Church, during the episcopate of the present bishop, can have gone home without assurance that the Church's work is not halting, nor the Lord's presence passed away from her midst ?

Nor is the attendance of the people at the ordinances of the sanctuary without its encouragement. The average number of persons attending our churches in 1858 was about 200,000, or about one-

third of the population of the diocese; the number of communicants was about 30,000, or the sixth of the adults. Why it is no longer possible to give the number of worshippers in our churches since the later census returns, this is not the place to explain.

But perhaps the most remarkable proof of the wonderful revival of zeal and loyal Church feeling during the period we are dealing with is afforded in the immense outlay upon the building and restoration of churches in East Anglia.

Between the years 1840 and 1879, upwards of 860 churches had been built or put into a condition of complete repair, at a cost of considerably more than nine hundred thousand pounds and this exclusive of the immense sums expended upon the cathedral since the beginning of the century. From the reply to the articles of inquiry issued by Bishop PELHAM previously to his last visitation, it appeared that of the whole number of churches in the diocese—some of them of great antiquity, others vastly too large for the parishes, others again unsuited to the locality in which they are now found,—only ninety-one were reported in bad condition, and the work is still going on.

All these are signs of life. Men that are dead do not work, and it is living men that we want. As long as we are alive in faith, and prayer, and practice, our work will not stop, and the Church will go on, its blessed influence widening and deepening from age to age. We of the Church of England have persecuted and been persecuted in our time. Suffering

has not hurt us, pillage has not destroyed us ; neither apathy at one time nor intolerance at another has quite overwhelmed us. Church rates have gone. The burial-places of our dead have ceased to be exclusively churchyards. Church schools are menaced ; other things may go that we would wish to retain. What then ? After every change that the timid expected would prove utterly destructive and the hostile exulted in as likely to prove crushing, the Church has only been roused to fresh activity, and has shown new and unexpected vigour.

* * * * *

From the land of Dumah, when they looked for darkness only, the voice came,—“ Watchman, what of the night ? ” Night ! It is not night that the faithful watcher looks for, *that* would be sure to come to an end.

“ The morning cometh, and also the night.” For those who love the darkness, Night ; for those who are awake, the dawn of a brighter day.

NOTES TO CHAPTERS.

NOTE (A.) TO CHAPTER II.

The following summary, compiled, for the most part, from Hadden and Stubbs's "Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland," vol. iii., gives briefly all that can be gathered of the ecclesiastical history of East Anglia (if it deserves to be called so) during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries.

- A.D. 669. Theodore visits all England and establishes BISI as bishop of East Anglia.
- A.D. 673, Sept. 24. Council of Hertford, at which all the bishops of England attend. The VIIth Canon orders an Annual Synod at Clovesho.
- A.D. 680, Sept. 17. Council at Hatfield, EALDWULF, king of East Anglia, consents to the assembling of the Council, Theodore presiding.
- A.D. 693. Letter of Pope Sergius, addressed to Ethelred, king of Mercia, and EALDWULF, king of East Anglia [of doubtful genuineness].
- A.D. 693. BEDWIN, bishop of Elmham, signs a Mercian charter.
- A.D. 716, July. Council at Clovesho, at which HÆRDRED, bishop of Dunwich, and NOTHERD, bishop of Elmham, attend.
- A.D. 742. Council at Clovesho. HUETLÆC and EANFRITH, both said to be bishops of Elmham, and EGELAF, said to be bishop of Dunwich, are reported as present, p. 342 ; but see note (d).
- A.D. 747, September. Council at Clovesho. HEARDULF, styled *Sacerdos Orientalium Anglorum*, attends probably as deputy of the East Anglian bishops.

- A.D. 747. ELFWALD, king of East Angles, writes to St. Boniface, begging for his prayers.
- A.D. 781. Synod of Brentford, HEARDRED, bishop of Dunwich, and ETHELWULF, bishop of Elmham, attend.
- A.D. 787. Synod at Ockley (in Surrey). HEARDRED, bishop of Dunwich, and ALHEARD, bishop of Elmham, attend [doubtful genuineness].
- A.D. 789. Synod at Chelsea. The same two bishops attend.
- A.D. 797. AELFHUN [bishop of Dunwich] "died at Sudbury, and he was buried at Dunwich, and TIDFRITH was chosen after him."
- A.D. 797. TIDFRITH, bishop of Dunwich, professes obedience to Archbishop Ethelheard.
- A.D. 798. Synod at Clovesho. ALHEARD, bishop of Elmham, and TIDFRITH, bishop of Dunwich, attend.
- A.D. 799. Synod at Tamworth. Same bishops attend.
- A.D. 803, October 12. Synod at Clovesho. ALHEARD, bishop of Elmham, with four priests and two deacons of his diocese, TIDFRITH, bishop of Dunwich, with two abbots and four priests, attend.
- A.D. 805, August. Synod at Ockley (?). The same two bishops.
- A.D. 816, July 27. Synod at Chelsea. TIDFRITH, bishop of Dunwich, and SIBBA, bishop of Elmham.
- A.D. 816. Profession of obedience by HUNFERTH [or Humberht?] to Archbishop Wulfred.
- A.D. 824. October 30. Synod at Clovesho. WEREMUND, bishop of Dunwich, and HUMBERHT, of Elmham, attend.
- A.D. 825. Synod at Clovesho. HUMBERHT, of Elmham, and WILRED, *bishop elect*, of Dunwich.
[Mr. Kemble, in the "Proceedings of the Archaeological Institute" for 1847, p. 48, has added to these notices the following.]
- A.D. 825. Signature of WILRED, "without the *electus*," indicating the probability of his having received consecration from Wulfred this year.
- A.D. 839. Signatures of WILRED and HUMBERHT.
[Mr. Kemble adds, "My opinion is, that after the accession of Æthelwulf [king of the West Saxons]

East Anglia had but little communication with the other English kingdoms . . . until the new consolidation of England by Æthelstan, when Elmham again took its place among the English sees.”]

NOTE (B.) TO CHAPTER VI.

THE LADY CHAPEL.

Excavations were made at the east end of the Cathedral in 1871, and the foundation of Bishop CALTHORP'S Chapel exposed, together with those certainly *prepared* for a Lady Chapel in Bishop HERBERT'S time. These latter were found to have been laid for walls and piers, varying from *five to nine feet in thickness*. I am strongly of opinion that Bishop HERBERT never carried out his design of building the Lady Chapel on these foundations, and that the Cathedral never was furnished with such a chapel till Bishop CALTHORPE supplied the deficiency.

NOTE (C.) TO CHAPTER VII.

The recent publication of Archbishop Peckham's Register in the Rolls Series has furnished us with some curious details of the primate's visitation of the Norfolk religious houses in the winter of 1280-1. The primate appears to have started about the 12th of November, 1280, for we find him at Wymondham—then a cell at St. Alban's Abbey—on the 17th, writing to the Bishop of Ely on the subject of the less frequent use of the Athanasian Creed which the Benedictines had attempted to bring about some three years before. Eight days after this he appears at Thorpe, near Norwich, where the bishop had a house, and it seems probable that, in the interval between his being at Wymondham and Thorpe, Peckham had visited the great Benedictine monastery at Norwich and the nunnery of Carrow. On the 6th of December he arrived at the Abbey of

St. Benet's Hulm, staying there at least two days, correcting abuses and "quæ corrigenda erant" (Bart. Cotton de Rege Edw. I., p. 161). On the 13th of December he was at Gimmingham, in the north of the county, where there was a deer park, and where at this very time a dispute was going on about the tithe of venison in the said park. The archbishop must have arrived here not later than the 12th, for the 13th was a very busy day with him, and he transacted some important business. From this date till the 4th of January he disappears. He *may* have been spending Christmas with the king, who was at Burgh, some forty miles off, or he *may* have proceeded to visit the religious houses on the northern coast of Norfolk, Bromholm and Weyburn, and thence on to the far more important priories at Binham and Walsingham, where Edward I. more than once was hospitably received. On the 4th of January, 1281, he was at Coxford, ten miles south-west of Walsingham, where was a priory of Augustinian canons who appear to have been living a pleasant, jovial sort of life, doing no particular harm, but doing no good. The prior was an easy-going old gentleman, who kept no accounts, let his canons do as they pleased, and liked going out with a number of dogs at his heels. Moreover, prior and canons, one and all, had been led astray by an evil-disposed person named John of Hunstanton, who had actually tempted them all to give themselves up to the seductive game of chess, and this intoxication must be put a stop to, even if it came to three days and nights on bread and water. On the 5th the archbishop moved off to another Augustinian house at Creak, this time riding due north about ten miles, where he induced the abbot to resign on the ground of old age and unfitness for his office. Three days after he is at Docking, where, in his manor of Southmere, John Lord Lovel at this time was the great man and kept up some state, and almost certainly entertained the archbishop and his retinue. The day after his arrival at Lord Lovel's there was some threat of opposition to the archiepiscopal visitation, for, on January 10th, Peckham, with his chaplains and secretaries, went to the church of Docking, and there fulminated a sentence of excommunication upon all who should dare to throw any obstacle in his way.

From Docketing he proceeded to Flitcham, a cell of Walsingham, eight or nine miles in a southerly direction, and thence, riding along the old Roman causeway called the Pedder's Road, arrived at Castleacre Priory, where he was writing letters on the 15th. Castleacre was another of the religious houses at which kings were wont to receive hospitality, and from Castleacre as a centre the archbishop may easily have carried on his visitation of the curious assemblage of monasteries in the valley of the Nar, viz., Westacre, Pentney, Shouldham, and Marham. On the 20th of January he was at Gaywood, near Lynn, another manor-house of the bishops of Norwich, and by this time the visitation of the "religious" was nearly complete—nearly but not quite, for there still remained the Premonstratensian abbey at West Dereham, in the low ground near Stoke Ferry, and the five conventual establishments at Thetford. In January we find the archbishop at Dereham.

From this brief attempt at an *itinerarium* of Peckham's visitation of Norfolk,—for I follow him no further,—it is abundantly clear that he found the monasteries, on the whole, in a creditable state, very little to find fault with, and very little to reform. If there had been any flagrant abuses, we should have been sure to hear of them, for Peckham was a most zealous Franciscan *friar*, and the last man in the world to show any mercy to *monks* who had gone wrong.

NOTE (D.) TO CHAPTER VIII.

ON SOME SUFFRAGAN BISHOPS OFFICIATING IN THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH.

A.D. 1263-1287. **Gilbert** "Hammensis" [query, Hamarensis, in Norway?]. STUBBS'S REGISTR., p. 143.
1333-1346. **Benedict** "Cardicensis" [*i. e.*, Cardica under Larissa]. I have not met with his name in any of the Bishops' registers of this date. Bishop Stubbs says he was suffragan of Norwich and Winchester.

1340-1350. **Robert Hyntlesham**, “*Sauastopolensis*,” which Blomefield curiously misread as *Sanascolensis*, occurs at this period as suffragan to Bishop Bateman. Wharton calls him Seleucovallensis, which is probably Seleuco Belus in Syria, under Apamea. About the same time it is said that—

John Pascal acted as suffragan to Bishop Bateman. He was a Suffolk man and Carmelite friar at Ipswich. Pitts says that Benedict XI. made him Bishop of Scutari; this would put his consecration some time between 1334 and 1352. In June, 1347, he became Bishop of Llandaff, though Stubbs seems to doubt the identity of the two bishops.

1372. **Robert** “*Archiliensis*” [probably Archelais in Palestine, under Cæsarea] occurs this year as ordaining for Bishop SPENCER. Fourteen years afterwards he is found as a suffragan of Hereford.

1384. **Thomas Lodowis**, Bishop of Killala, in Ireland [“*Aladensis*”]. I find him ordaining for Bishop SPENCER in 1385 and 1386, and I have little doubt that he was the Thomas “*Scutariensis*,” who ordained 4th June, 1384. He was a Dominican friar. Cotton says he died in 1388.

1393. **John Leicester**, Archbishop of Smyrna. He ordained almost continuously for Bishops SPENCER, TOTTINGTON, COURTENAY, and WAKERING, from May, 1393, till December, 1423. He was rector of Threxton in 1400, and appears to have been a Carmelite.

1424. **Robert Windel**. He ordains for Bishop WAKERING in December, 1424, under the title of Bishop of Emly, in Ireland (“*Imlicensis*”); but, as it appears that he was “provided” for this see only and never was put in possession, I conjecture that he was furnished with another title, and that he was the same whom Bishop ALNEWICK appointed his

suffragan in 1426 as *Robert Gradensis*. He continued to ordain in the diocese of Norwich as late as March, 1452.

1450. **Thomas Scrope**, sometimes called Thomas de Bradley. He was a very notable personage in his day, and renowned for his great learning and the rigour of his asceticism. Originally a Benedictine monk, he put himself under the Carmelite rule at Norwich. Eugene IV. made him Bishop of Dromore, in Ireland, in 1446, and subsequently sent him on some legation to Rhodes. He resigned his bishopric and returned to Norwich, and in 1454 was presented by Edmund, Lord Grey of Hastings, to the rectory of Sparham. Bishop LYHART appointed him his suffragan 12th September, 1450. He continues to ordain in the palace chapel, or in the Church of the Carmelites, down to February, 1472. After Bishop LYHART's death his name is no longer found. There is much about him in Pitts's "Angl. Script.," p. 681, which is chiefly derived from the "Speculum Carmelitarum." See also Blomefield, iv., 419, and Cotton, "Fasti Hib."
1475. **Florence Wolley**, Bishop of Clogher, to which bishopric he was consecrated, 27th November, 1475. He was collated to the rectory of Merston, Norfolk, 12th March, 1478, and presented to the vicarage of Codenham, Suffolk, 9th July, 1481. He died in 1500, at the priory of Snape, in Suffolk. His will is at Canterbury, and is extremely interesting. It is curious that Cotton makes no mention of him in the "Fasti Hib.," that Brady did not know his surname, and that Blomefield falls into a blunder in the only place where he notices him (ix., 427).
1502. **Edmund Lychfield**, Bishop of Chalcedon. He appears as Prior of the House of Augustinian Canons at Flitcham, in 1498. He was Rural Dean of Norwich and Taverham in 1503. I find him ordaining for Bishop NIX in the Lady Chapel of the Cathedral, 21st May, 1502.

1531. **John Underwood**, Bishop of Chalcedon. He was a Norwich man born and a Franciscan friar. Commenced D.D. at Cambridge, 1501. He was presented to the rectories of North Creake and of Eccles-by-the-Sea, Norfolk, in 1505. Acting for Bishop NIX in 1531 as suffragan, his duty was to degrade Bilney after his condemnation. I can find no evidence whatever to support the assertion of Blomefield that he was cruel as a persecutor. Foxe's silence when he had every temptation to publish such a character of him is strongly against any such a supposition. He died in 1541, and was buried in St. Andrew's Church, Norwich.

Of **John Salisbury** I have given some account in my "One Generation of a Norfolk House," chap. ii., n. 17. I find him ordaining for Bishop Parkhurst as late as Aug. 13, 1573, *i.e.*, a month before his death.

Of **Thomas Edwardston** or **Thomas Bedingfeld** I know no more than Blomefield has told us. I have been surprised not to meet with either of them in the Registers of the Diocese.

Of **Thomas Manning**, Bishop of Ipswich (see *supra*, chap. x.), I do not find that he ever acted as a suffragan in the Diocese.

NOTE (E.) TO CHAPTER X.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CHANGES EFFECTED DURING THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY IN MATTERS DOCTRINAL, RITUAL, AND ECCLESIASTICAL.

A.D. 1536. "Articles to stablyshe Christen Quietnes."

(a) Use of Images retained.

(β) Saints "...advancers of our prayers."

(γ) Certain Rites and Ceremonies "...have power... to stir and lift up our minds unto God..."

(δ) Purgatory, prayers for dead retained.

- A.D. 1537. **"The Institution of a Christian Man."**
 (α) Seven Sacraments retained.
 (β) Images retained.
 (γ) "...Christian men should pray for souls departed."
- A.D. 1539. **The Six Articles.**
 (α) Transubstantiation set forth.
 (β) Communion in both kinds declared unnecessary.
 (γ) **Priests may not marry.**
 (δ) Vows of chastity to be observed.
 (ε) Private masses to be continued.
 (ζ) Auricular confession to be retained.
- A.D. 1539. **"A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man."**
 The doctrine in this work agrees in the main with that of the Six Articles; *i.e.*, it leans to the "Old" rather than to the "New Learning."
- A.D. 1540. Proclamation ordering
 a Bible to be provided
 by the curate and parishioners.
- A.D. 1543. The **Bible forbidden.**
- A.D. 1547. Injunction directing that
 the Bible should be set up
 in every church.
 (July). First Book of **Homilies** published.
- A.D. 1548 (March). **Communion Service** published.
 All **Images** to be removed.
 (November.) **Clergy allowed to marry.**
- A.D. 1549. The **English Liturgy** appears.
- A.D. 1551. The XLII. Articles.
- A.D. 1562. The XXXVIII. Articles.
- A.D. 1571. The XXXIX. Articles.
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NOTE (F.) TO CHAPTER XI.

It was not until the 9th October, 1646, that both Houses of Parliament ordained that the "Name, Title, Stile, and Dignity . . . of all bishops . . . within the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales . . . should be wholly abolished and taken away" . . . not only their lands, but their "Charters, Deeds, Books, Writings, &c. were vested in trustees for the payment of the just and necessary debts of the Kingdom." On the 16th November following, an ordinance was passed for the sale of all their property, and to raise £200,000 by way of loan. On the 30th April, 1649, precisely the same course was taken with the dean and chapter and their lands, except that in the latter case all leases granted since the 1st December, 1621, were declared void. The plundering of the cathedrals, the unmeasured robbery and violence, the pitiless persecution of the "delinquent clergy," which had gone on for seven or eight years before these acts were passed, were mere instances of mob law, but they were all condoned, and the extent and the havoc we shall never know. In 1646, the bishop's palace at Winchester, the deanery, and eight prebends' houses were actually pulled down and the materials sold. At Norwich the destruction seems to have been less sweeping only because there was less to destroy.

LIST OF BISHOPS OF EAST ANGLIA FROM THE TIME OF THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SEE AT NORWICH.

HERBERT LOSINGA.—Consecrated 1091. Died July 22, 1119.
EVERARD DE MONTGOMERY, Archdeacon of Salisbury.—Cons.

June 12, 1121. Retired, 1145.

WILLIAM TURBE, Prior of Norwich.—Cons. 1146. Died 1174.

JOHN OF OXFORD, Dean of Salisbury.—Cons. Dec. 14, 1175.

Died June 2, 1200.

JOHN DE GREY, Archeacon of Gloucester.—Cons. Sept. 24,
1200. Died Oct. 18, 1214.

PANDULPH MASCA, Papal Legate.—Cons. May, 1222. Died
1226.

THOMAS DE BLUMVILLE.—Cons. Dec. 20, 1226. Died Aug.
16, 1236.

WILLIAM DE RALEGH.—Cons. Sept. 25, 1239. Translated to
Winchester, 1244.

WALTER CALTHORP or DE SUFFIELD.—Cons. Feb. 19, 1245.
Died May 20, 1257.

SIMON DE WATTON.—Cons. March 10, 1258. Died Jan. 2,
1266.

ROGER DE SKERNING, Prior of Norwich.—Cons. Sept. 19,
1266. Died Jan. 22, 1278.

WILLIAM DE MIDDLETON, Archdeacon of Canterbury.—Cons.
May 29, 1278. Died Sept. 1, 1288.

RALPH DE WALPOLE, Archdeacon of Ely.—Cons. March 20,
1289. Translated to Ely, 1299.

JOHN SALMON, Prior of Ely.—Cons. Nov. 15, 1299. Died
July 2, 1325.

- ROBERT BALDOK, Archdeacon of Middlesex.—Confirmed in the see, Aug. 11. Resigned Sept. 3, 1325.
- WILLIAM AYERMIN.—Cons. Sept. 15, 1325. Died March 27, 1336.
- ANTONY BEK, Dean of Lincoln.—Cons. March 30, 1337. Died Dec 19, 1343.
- WILLIAM BATEMAN, Dean of Lincoln.—Cons. May 23, 1344. Died Jan. 6, 1355.
- THOMAS PERCY.—Cons. Jan 3, 1356. Died Aug. 8, 1369.
- HENRY DESPENSER.—Cons. April 20, 1370. Died Aug. 23, 1406.
- ALEXANDER TOTTINGTON, Prior of Norwich.—Cons. Oct. 23, 1407. Died April 28, 1413.
- RICHARD COURTENAY, Dean of Wells.—Cons. Sept. 17, 1413. Died Sept. 15, 1415.
- JOHN WAKERING, Archdeacon of Canterbury.—Cons. May 31, 1416. Died April 9, 1425.
- WILLIAM ALNEWICK, Archdeacon of Salisbury.—Cons. Aug. 18, 1426. Translated to Lincoln, Sept. 1436.
- THOMAS BROWN, Bishop of Rochester.—Translated to Norwich, Sept. 1436. Died Dec. 6, 1445.
- WALTER LYHART, Provost of Oriel.—Cons. Feb. 27, 1446. Died May 17, 1472.
- JAMES GOLDWELL, Dean of Salisbury.—Cons. Oct. 4, 1472. Died Feb. 15, 1499.
- THOMAS JANE, Dean of the Chapel Royal.—Cons. Oct. 20, 1499. Died Sept. 1500.
- RICHARD NIX, Archdeacon of Wells.—Cons. April 18, 1501. Died Jan. 14, 1536.
- WILLIAM RUGG, Abbot of Hulm.—Cons. June 11, 1536. Resigned 1550.
- THOMAS THIRLBY, Bishop of Westminster.—Translated April, 1550. Translated to Ely, 1554.
- JOHN HOPTON, Confessor to Queen Mary.—Cons. Oct. 28, 1554. Died 1558.
- JOHN PARKHURST.—Cons. Sept. 1, 1560. Died Feb. 2, 1575.
- EDMUND FREAKE, Bishop of Rochester.—Translated Feb. 14, 1575. Translated to Worcester, 1584.

- EDMUND SCAMBLER, Bishop of Peterborough.—Trans. Jan., 1585. Died May 7, 1594.
- WILLIAM REDMAN, Archd. of Canterbury.—Cons. Jan. 12, 1595. Died Sept. 25, 1602.
- JOHN JEGON, Master of C.C.C.C.—Cons. Feb. 20, 1603. Died March 13, 1618.
- JOHN OVERALL, Bishop of Lichfield.—Trans. Oct., 1618. Died May 12, 1619.
- SAMUEL HARSNET, Bishop of Chichester.—Trans. Sept., 1619. Trans. to York, 1628.
- FRANCIS WHITE, Bishop of Carlisle.—Trans. Feb., 1629. Trans. to Ely, Dec., 1631.
- RICHARD CORBET, Bishop of Oxford.—Trans. May, 1632. Died July 28, 1635.
- MATTHEW WREN, Bishop of Hereford.—Trans. Dec., 1635. Trans. to Ely, 1638.
- RICHARD MONTAGUE, Bishop of Chichester.—Trans. May, 1638. Died April 13, 1641.
- JOSEPH HALL, Bishop of Exeter.—Trans. Dec., 1641. Died Sept. 8, 1656.
- EDWARD REYNOLDS, Dean of Christ Church.—Cons. Jan. 16, 1661. Died July 28, 1676.
- ANTHONY SPARROW, Bishop of Exeter.—Trans. Nov., 1676. Died May 18, 1685.
- WILLIAM LLOYD, Bishop of Peterborough.—Trans. July, 1685. Ejected 1691.
- JOHN MOORE, Prebend of Ely.—Cons. July 5, 1691. Trans. to Ely, July, 1707.
- CHARLES TRIMNEL, Archd. of Norfolk.—Cons. Feb. 8, 1708. Trans. to Winchester, Aug., 1721.
- THOMAS GREEN, Archd. of Canterbury.—Cons. Oct. 8, 1721. Trans. to Ely, Sept., 1723.
- JOHN LENG, Chaplain to George I.—Cons. Nov. 3, 1723. Died Oct. 26, 1727.
- WILLIAM BAKER, Bishop of Bangor.—Trans. Dec., 1727. Died Dec. 4, 1732.
- ROBERT BUTTS, Dean of Norwich.—Cons. Feb. 25, 1733. Trans. to Ely, May, 1738.

THOMAS GOOCH, Bishop of Bristol.—Trans. Oct., 1738. Trans. to Ely, 1748.

SAMUEL LISLE, Bishop of St. Asaph.—Trans. April, 1748. Died Oct. 3, 1749.

THOMAS HAYTOR, Archd. of York.—Cons. Dec. 3, 1749. Trans. to London, Oct., 1761.

PHILIP YONGE, Bishop of Bristol.—Trans. Nov. 1761. Died April 23, 1783.

LEWIS BAGOT, Bishop of Bristol.—Trans. June, 1783. Trans. to St. Asaph, April, 1790.

GEORGE HORNE, Dean of Canterbury.—Cons. June 6, 1790. Died Jan. 17, 1792.

CHARLES MANNERS SUTTON, Dean of Peterborough.—Cons. April 8, 1792. Trans. to Canterbury, Feb., 1805.

HENRY BATHURST, Prebend of Oxford.—Cons. April 28, 1805. Died April 5, 1837.

EDWARD STANLEY, Rector of Alderley.—Cons. June 11, 1837. Died Sept. 6, 1849.

SAMUEL HINDS, Dean of Carlisle.—Cons. Dec. 2, 1849. Resigned 1857.

JOHN THOMAS PELHAM.—Cons. June 11, 1857.

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